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Maria Jones

THE HISTORY

OF

AN ADVENTURER IN NEW GUINEA.

VOL. II.

LONDON

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ANDREW DEVEREL:

THE HISTORY OF

AN ADVENTURER IN NEW GUINEA.

BY

CHARLES BEACH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

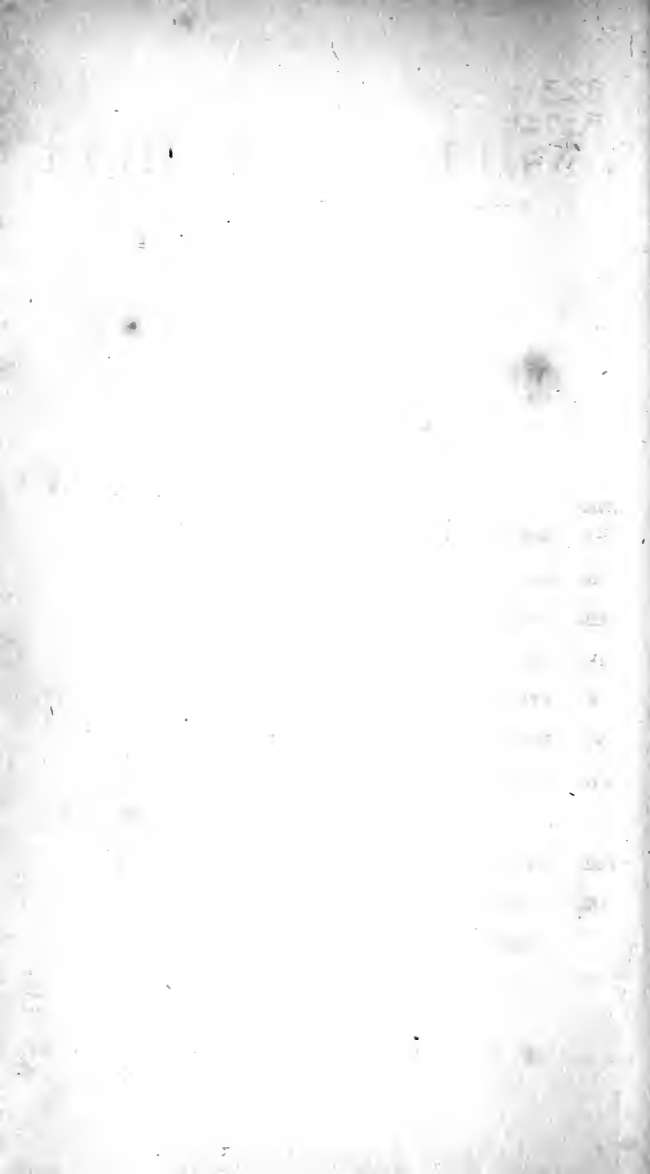
VOL. II.



LONDON:

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ANDREW DEVEREL.



CHAPTER I.

WILLIAM MANBY.

MATEO BARRI learnt in Panama that one of the passengers by the steamer lately arrived was missing, and that some of the passengers thought the missing man might have been murdered for his money; for it was generally understood amongst them that Deverel, the missing man, was taking home a large amount of specie. It was known that Deverel had left the city early in the day before, and that the mule on which he rode had been found saddled and bridled without the rider. Mateo went to the Jew and told him of the visitor he had

received the day before, and about the missing man who was supposed to have so much money. The Jew went to the hotel where Deverel had been staying, and got into conversation with one of the passengers whom he heard called by the name of Manby, and from him learned the full particulars of what he wished to know. This man Manby seemed to take a greater interest in trying to learn something of the missing man than any of the others, and before leaving the hotel, the Jew glanced at the register and saw the name of William Manby. The Jew wrote a note in the following words:—

Wednesday, 9 P.M.

‘SIR,—Please pay the landlord my bill, and I will give you the amount when you reach Cruces. I went out on a little excursion, and having found myself within five miles of Cruces, I do not think it worth time and

trouble to return to Panama. I have bargained with the bearer of this to bring my luggage. Will you please see that he gets it and starts immediately? I advise you to come on, or we may be too late for the steamer.

‘ Respectfully yours,

‘ ANDREW DEVEREL.

‘ Mr. William Manby.’

Mateo took this note, and with Manuel and three mules went to the hotel where the missing man had stopped. He entered the house, and in a smoking-room saw several persons whom he took to be late arrivals from California. Approaching one of them who appeared to be something more of a gentleman than the others, he asked him for Señor Manby.

‘ Yes, my name is Manby.’

Mateo gave him the note.

Manby carefully read it over, and then asked, ‘Where did you get this?’

‘At coffee-house one league and one half league dis side de Cruses,’ said Mateo.

‘When did you receive it?’ asked Manby, not liking the expression of Mateo’s eyes.

‘El noche — no, el night pasty, one leetle mas que nine!’ said Mateo, in a manner that would have allayed suspicion in the mind of any but a man like Manby.

‘Describe the man who gave it to you,’ said Manby, determined on not being deceived.

Mateo, on being made to understand what was wanted, gave an exact description of Andrew Deverel.

Manby then walked to the register to compare Deverel’s name with the handwriting of the note he had received; but the name could not be found, as Deverel had neglected to place it on the register of the hotel.

‘Walbridge,’ said he, addressing another present, ‘did you ever see Deverel’s handwriting?’

‘Never,’ was the reply.

‘There can’t be any doubt but what all is right,’ thought Manby; then turning to Mateo, he asked, ‘Where are your mules?’

‘Aqui,’ said Mateo, pointing to the door.

‘What time will you reach Cruces, should you start now?’

‘Si I vamos dis now, nine dis night — ten mos sure.’

‘Can you let me have a mule to ride and take my trunk?’ asked Manby, resolving to take Deverel’s advice and wait no longer in Panama.

‘Si, Señor,’ said Mateo, who, speaking a little English and a little Spanish, thought that he would be always intelligible to any but his own countrymen. In speaking to natives of

the Isthmus or to Americans, he was never particular whether he used the English or Spanish languages, and often used both in forming the same sentence.

Mateo explained to Manby that he wished the mules loaded immediately, as he wished to feed them outside the city, and that he would not have time to come in again for the luggage. The trunks were then placed on two of the mules, and Mateo started with them, leaving one mule, on which Manby was to follow in an hour or two. Manuel stayed as muleteer and guide to conduct Manby to the robber's home. Mateo was afraid, should he allow Manby to go on to Cruces, he might afterwards make some trouble, and thought the safest plan was to dispose of him with Deverel, and nothing would then be known of either.

The sun was just setting as Mateo returned to his rancho with the two mules and

the luggage. He had been drinking wine, and was in elevated spirits.

‘Yvonne,’ said he in Italian, ‘our fortune is made. I have it with me. We shall leave here and see our native land. How is the sick man?’

‘Much better,’ said Yvonne in a low quiet tone. ‘I think he will get well.’

‘I have been a fool,’ said Mateo, ‘for trying to cure him. He must die this night.’

Yvonne tried to make him silent by pointing to the wall of the room on the outside of which Deverel was lying, under the projection of the roof of the house.

‘He cannot understand me,’ said Mateo, ‘and what if he does? Is he not helpless? He can do nothing but die.’

Yvonne was determined to save the companion of her girlhood, if possible, and resolved not to undeceive Mateo in the belief

that he was not understood, for Deverel would then learn of his danger. Mateo continued his self-congratulations on his good fortune.

‘I have his trunks with me, and they are heavy with gold, and I have learnt that he has drafts for large amounts on New Orleans and New York. I will get the money on them. Manuel will be here in an hour with another. Both must die. Give me some dinner, quick. I have work to do this night. Look cheerful, cara sposa ; I tell you our fortune is made.’

Mateo went out to unload the mules and turn them off to graze. While he was doing this, Yvonne placed her face to a crevice in the wall near where Deverel was lying, and whispered, ‘Can you leave the hammock and hide yourself?’

‘I fear not,’ answered Deverel, ‘I can lift my hands only with difficulty. I am very weak.’

‘You must try. Creep away into the

bushes. The night is dark, and you will not have to go far. There is a bridle hanging near you. Listen which way the mules go. Try to catch one before morning, and ride to Panama. I wish that I could escape with you, for I fear you cannot find the path that leads from here.'

Mateo soon returned, and Yvonne placed before him some tortillas, and a stew made of jerked beef.

The excitement caused by the danger in which he found himself gave Deverel strength, and while Mateo was at his dinner, he gently left the hammock and walked a few paces from the house, and sat down to reflect.

'Another is expected here,' thought he, 'whom that man will kill. It is my duty to stay here and save him, but what can I do? I am without weapons, and with difficulty can keep myself from falling.'

He remembered the direction in which he had heard Mateo when coming with the mules not long before, and he resolved to find the path, meet Manuel with the stranger, and warn the man of his danger. Crossing the space of cleared ground, he found a narrow path by the side of hills, and followed it. He had not got out of sight of the light in Mateo's house before he became so weak that he was compelled to sit down and rest. When he had been sitting about ten minutes, he heard footsteps, and, soon after, a voice that he recognised as being that of William Manby said in Spanish, 'I see a light. Is it from the house where you received the order for the baggage?'

'No,' answered another whom Deverel supposed to be Manuel; 'it is a rancho where we must stop to-night.'

'If the other man with the baggage is not

there, we must go on,' said Manby. 'Shall we find him there?'

'Si, Señor,' answered the other. 'You will find everything there with him.'

'How do you know? When he left, I thought we were going on to Cruces to-night.'

'He is the owner of the house,' answered the other.

'Then you may take that,' said Manby, and Deverel heard the sound of a heavy blow, succeeded by a low moan. During the conversation above given, they had advanced nearly opposite to where Deverel was sitting.

'Manby!' said Deverel, rising up and advancing towards him.

'Deverel!' exclaimed Manby. 'Is that you? I hope I have not done wrong.'

'You did well,' said Deverel, as he saw the body of Manuel on the ground. 'You are

going to a robber's den, from whence I have just escaped.'

'Ah! indeed!—worse than I thought. I knocked that fellow down with the butt of my revolver for being a lying scoundrel and deceiving me. Have you seen the man with the trunks?'

'Yes, he arrived about an hour ago. Did you let him have my trunks?'

'Yes, I started him off with yours and mine?'

'What, in God's name, induced you to do that? What right had you to remove my property?' demanded Deverel in a tone of irritation.

'A man brought me a note from you requesting me to deliver your trunks to the bearer, and to pay your hotel bill. I have your note with me.'

'That is strange, for I wrote no such note

to anyone. Let us try to explain this mystery.'

Each one then told his story, and then the mystery was not explained. They could only see that they were the victims of a deep-laid scheme for robbing and murdering them, from which only good fortune could enable them to escape.

'Are you sure there is but one man at the house?' asked Manby, now determined on seeking revenge.

'There is but one man and one woman,' answered Deverel.

'Stay here, and I will be back for you in two minutes,' said Manby. 'Do not think of going with me; you are too weak. I want no assistance.'

'You shall not go alone. I have had a rest, and feel strong enough to whip an elephant. We must not harm the woman. She has

nursed me in my illness, and she warned me to escape. The man has also befriended me, yet I could see him die, although we must try to take him alive.'

'Take him alive !' said Manby in a tone of surprise. 'You are ill—very ill in body and mind. Stay here till I come for you.'

'No, I shall go with you.'

'Very well, but do not interfere with me. Let each one play his own game, and wait a minute. Let me give this fellow another blow. We don't want him following behind us.'

'No. Do n't strike, but tie and gag him.'

'All right,' said Manby, who went and knelt over Manuel for a minute, then returned and said, 'Come on—now for the other one.'

CHAPTER II.

MATEO AND MANUEL.

MANBY and Deverel proceeded in silence towards the rancho, leading the mule on which the former had been riding.

When near the house, Deverel whispered, 'Let us try and capture him alive.'

'Folly—folly!' exclaimed Manby. 'We might have to stay here several weeks to attend his trial. Please step on the other side of the mule.'

Deverel did not wish to be recognised at the first instant of meeting Mateo, and did as he was requested.

As they approached nearer, Mateo heard them, and came forward, saying, 'Good even, Senor.' Advancing nearer, he asked, 'Donde est Manuel?'

'A few paces behind,' answered Manby.

Seeing there was another on the other side of the mule, Mateo then enquired, 'Quien tiene usted aqui?'

Manby had then got within reach of him, and gave him a heavy blow on the head with his revolver.

Mateo fell upon his hands and knees, and, with astonishing presence of mind, seemed to pull his knife as he fell. He was shaking his head as though trying to throw off the effects of the blow, and struggling to rise, when Manby stepped back one pace, and, before Deverel had time to prevent him, fired a shot from the revolver.

Before the report of the shot ceased.

echoing amongst the neighbouring hills, Mateo was dead.

The excitement that had given strength to Andrew Deverel instantly subsided, and he became as weak as a child.

Yvonne came running out of the house, and threw herself upon the dead body of Mateo. For a moment she seemed frantic with grief. She then arose and embraced Deverel. She again returned to Mateo, and then again to Deverel.

Her attentions were thus several times transferred from one to the other, until Deverel, who was too weak and unwell to resist her embraces, was, as well as Yvonne, covered with the blood of the dead robber.

This scene was very interesting to Manby, but, feeling some pity for Deverel, he put an end to it by leading him into the house. All

that night Yvonne was sighing and crying with grief.

Early the next morning Deverel awoke after a short but refreshing slumber, feeling much better than at any time since his illness.

Yvonne had just cried herself to sleep, and Manby was sleeping soundly and had been doing so all night.

Passing by the body of Mateo, Deverel walked to the brook, to bathe his head in the cold water.

‘There was fearful work last night,’ thought he, ‘and I only performed the part of looker-on, yet I am glad that man did not die by my hands.’

He thought of Manuel, who was not far away, and walked up the path to see him. On reaching the place, he saw that Manuel was dead. A silk banda or sash was tied tight around his neck. He had been strangled.

Deverel returned to the house, and found Manby up and lighting a fire.

‘Manby,’ said Deverel, ‘I told you last night to bind that man, and you killed him.’

‘What man?’ asked Manby.

‘The one you knocked down on the road at the time I met you.’

‘Ah! yes — I remember. You told me to tie and gag him, and so I did, and that in a way I thought the most safe and sure,’ said Manby, placing the chocolatera on the fire.

‘Manby,’ said Deverel, ‘last night’s work was murder—a double murder.’

‘Nonsense! Men like those can’t be murdered,’ said Manby. ‘You surely can’t feel any pity for them. What mercy would they have shown to you? I am quite proud of the part I have taken in the business, and wish I had never done anything worse.’

Yvonne then woke up, and silently assisted in preparing them some breakfast.

‘What do you intend doing now?’ asked Deverel when they had finished their chocolate.

‘Catch the mules and take our baggage to Cruces,’ answered Manby. ‘What else would you think of doing?’

‘Surely you do not intend to leave the country without making this affair known to the authorities, and being legally, if not morally, acquitted of blame?’

‘Why not? Suppose the business to be legally investigated, and we were honourably discharged, it would not make us any more innocent; or should a court, with its uncertain wisdom, pronounce that I have done wrong, it would not make me any the more guilty. I am satisfied that I did nothing wrong, and believe that thanks are due me for what I have

done; but I have not time to stay and receive them.'

'I know that two men have been killed,' said Deverel. 'They were killed in my presence, and I shall not leave the country until all the circumstances connected with the affair are made known, or until I have liberty from the authorities to go, although I am as anxious to leave as you can be.'

'Shall you mention my name?' asked Manby.

'Certainly. All that I know concerning the matter shall be stated.'

'Then I must stay and see the end of it. It would be a neglect of duty I owe to myself, to posterity, and to the credit of the State of Indiana, to flee from an examination, if my name is to be mentioned in it. But what shall we do with this woman? She will be punished for the crimes of the men, if not for her own.'

‘I is not a bad woman,’ said Yvonne in bad English. ‘I no but live wit Mateo, but I no live happy, but I is much free now, but I cry one great much for Mateo, for he did love me so.’

Here was a consideration that Deverel had not thought about. The sense of honour that would not allow him to leave the Isthmus until the affair had been investigated was lost when thinking of Yvonne.

‘Catch two mules,’ said he to Manby, ‘one for yourself to ride to Panama, and another for Yvonne to ride to Cruces. She must go down the river and wait for us at the Irving House in Chagres. I will stay here and wait for your return with an alcalde. Make all the haste you can. We don’t want to stop here to-night.’

Manby started for the mules whistling.

‘Had Manuel any clothes besides what he

had on?' asked Deverel of Yvonne, after Manby had left.

'Si, varee pretee for de Sundee,' said Yvonne.

'Put them on: they will fit you well. Can you remember the Irving House in Chagres?'

'Si.'

'You must go there and wait till I come. Now show me where Mateo has hidden all the trunks and other things he has taken.'

Yvonne took him to the corner of the house, and pointed to a tree on the brow of a hill. Under the tree was a grove of bushes, which she said concealed the entrance to a cave where he would find all. He went as she directed, and without much trouble found the cave, but did not explore it. When he returned to the house, Yvonne was dressed in man's attire.

Manby returned with the mules, and while

he and Deverel were saddling them, Yvonne put a few articles of clothing into a carpet-bag. Amongst other things she took a small bag of American gold, and another containing a hundred doubloons.

When Deverel entered the house, she produced a canvas bag full of silver coins, and taking from it fifty dollars to pay her way to Chagres, she told him to give the rest to the alcalde when he came.

She took a farewell look of Mateo, and sobbed vehemently. 'Poor Mateo,' said she, 'you was one bad man, but you did love me. No one do love me now.'

Manby enquired of Yvonne the distance to Panama, and she told him two leagues and a half.

'How then could I be over eight hours in coming that distance?' he asked.

Yvonne explained that Manuel had taken

him round the hills eight miles farther than necessary, in order not to arrive until night.

Manby, having never crossed the Isthmus, was easily deceived.

They mounted, and Yvonne bade Deverel adieu, and rode away sobbing about Mateo.

Manby and Yvonne rode together until they reached the old military road leading from Panama to Cruces, when they parted.

After parting with Manby, a great and sudden change seemed to come over the mind of Yvonne. Her grief was dispelled, and her countenance brightened.

For two years she had led a very lonely, dreary life, and she was now free. All the world was before her in which to commence life anew, and she was not unhappy at the thought. Yvonne was a strong-minded woman, somewhat dangerous, and unscrupulous.

CHAPTER III.

THE INVESTIGATION.

IN the afternoon Manby returned with an alcalde and another officer of justice, escorted by six men. Manby also brought with him men and mules to take Deverel and the baggage back to Panama. Deverel gave the Alcalde his account of the affair, which was compared with the story told by Manby. The bag of silver left by Yvonne was given to the two officers, and they were shown the cave, which they entered, and were surprised at the amount of plunder it contained. When returning to the house, the Alcalde made some

remarks to his companion, whom he called Señor N——, about the shameful mismanagement of a government which had allowed two men to carry on such a system of plunder for so long without detection. Three trunks were outside of the door, two of which belonged to Deverel, and the other to Manby. Manby was conducted to the opposite side of the house by one of the men while the Alcalde questioned Deverel. He first asked him which of the trunks belonged to him. On being told, he demanded the keys, which were given him. Deverel was then told to name some article in each trunk, and to give a particular description of each thing. He pointed out one trunk in which he said was a *San Francisco Herald*, and he mentioned the date. The trunk was opened and the paper found. The Alcalde expressed himself satisfied, but Señor N—— was not. He wished to be

fully convinced that the men owned the trunks before they should be allowed to take them. The woman, he said, must be found, and the men must appear as witnesses against her. Deverel said that he believed the only crime committed by the woman was that of living with a bad husband, and not making his misdeeds known. He said that she had warned him to escape on the night her husband was killed. She had left the property and money her husband had plundered from others, and before her departure had made known where the property was concealed. Señor N—— told him that he was not the judge as to whether she was guilty or not, and seemed much offended that he had even expressed an opinion. He seemed disposed for some reason to make them trouble, and wished him to describe something in the other trunk claimed by him.

‘A white shirt,’ said Deverel, ‘with buttons on the collar and sleeves.’

‘That will not do. Tell us something else,’ said the officer.

‘Another white shirt with buttons,’ said Deverel, annoyed at the suspicion that he was deceiving them.

‘You do not own the trunk, and know nothing of its contents,’ said Señor N——. ‘How can we believe any of your story when you try to deceive us in a part of it?’

‘I am but amusing myself with your distrustful nature,’ said Deverel.

Señor N—— turned pale with anger, and the Alcalde frowned.

‘You shall be taken prisoners to Panama,’ said Señor N——, ‘and the luggage you claim shall be disposed of in the same way as that in the cave.’

Manby, who overheard this, came up and

said that they had only saved their lives and property from being taken by robbers; and, said he, 'if necessary I will resort to the same means to prevent being robbed by you.'

'Seize that man—bind him!' shouted Señor N—— to the soldiers.

'Stay!' cried Deverel, stepping between Manby and the advancing men. Then turning to the officer, he said, 'To convince you that I know something of the contents of that trunk, I can find a package in it addressed to you, which I have brought many thousand miles.'

'Caramba! Pray let me see it,' said the officer in a tone that expressed doubt.

Deverel unlocked the trunk and took from it the parcel intrusted to his care by the Spanish maid in Manilla. Señor N—— took the package, and on seeing the handwriting shook with excitement. Hastily removing

the wrapper, he found a letter and the portrait of a young woman.

‘*Madre de Dios!*’ he exclaimed. ‘How came you by this?’

‘It was given me by a young woman in Manilla for the purpose of giving to you. I called at your house the day after landing in Panama, but you were not at home; and I was intending to call again on the day that I came here, but was prevented by the circumstances you already know.’

‘How did she learn that I was here?’ asked Señor N——.

‘I cannot tell. Are you satisfied that the trunk is mine?’

‘Certainly. Let us be off for Panama.’

Three men were left to bury the bodies and to guard the property till it should be removed, and the party started for the city. Señor N—— stopped behind the others for

a few minutes to read his letter. ‘You have done me a favour for which I can never repay you,’ said he to Deverel on overtaking the party. ‘You have brought me intelligence from one for whom I have sought in vain for more than three years. She was taken from me in Cadiz, and all that I could learn of her was that she had been sent to some Spanish colony. I have been deceived into thinking that she was for a while in Havana, and that for some time kept me searching for her in the West Indies and Mexico. Despairing of ever finding her, I took a situation under the government here, until I could get further intelligence from Spain.’

They reached the city about nine in the evening, and Manby and Deverel were told that they were free to go where they pleased.

On parting with Señor N——, he shook Deverel warmly by the hand, and told him

that, if ever he had an opportunity of aiding him in any way, he would do so with nearly as much pleasure as he should go to meet Isabel.

The next day Deverel and Manby reached Cruces, and, the day after, Chagres, just in time for the steamer for New Orleans, which, fortunately for them, had been delayed from the time appointed for it to sail.

They found Yvonne at the Irving House, where she with some difficulty obtained female's apparel, and took a passage in the same steamer with them. During the passage to New Orleans, Yvonne gave Deverel the following account of her adventures from the time he left her and Beatrice till the time he met her with Mateo.

‘We stayed about the neighbourhood of where you left us three or four days, hoping that you would come back. Beatrice and I

were together four or five years after you left us. From April till November we would travel all over the country, often not knowing what state of the Union we were in. In the winter time we used to get engagements in some low theatre or some other place of amusement in New York. We could both dance and sing. Beatrice could dance on the "elastic cord," and I could ride in the circus. Three years ago Beatrice resolved to go home to Italy. We had saved about one thousand dollars each, and she wished to see her mother. I wished to go with her, although I had no relations to see; but I had become acquainted with Mateo, who persuaded me to stay and marry him.

‘In the summer time Mateo used to go with a travelling circus as a rider and tumbler, and in the winter he would get an engagement in New York.

‘Mateo soon spent all my money, and we were very poor. When gold was discovered in California, we were engaged to go to that country, our passage and expenses being paid.

‘In Panama, Mateo broke the engagement, and concealed me and himself for a long time. He had won a few hundred dollars by gambling, and thought he could do better on the Isthmus than by keeping to his agreement.

‘We did not remain in Panama long before Mateo sought out the place where you found us, and commenced the life of a robber. Such a life was natural to him, for his father was a robber before him.

‘I was not happy living in that place with Mateo, yet I shall never forget how he loved me.’

‘You are mistaken, Yvonne,’ said Deverel ;
‘Mateo did not love you. No man who commits a premeditated deed of crime, can

love a woman as man should love. The sentiment is not worthy of being called love, that is not strong enough to make him respect himself for the sake of the object of that love.'

'Do not try to make me think that Mateo did not love me,' said Yvonne.

During the passage, Yvonne never lost an opportunity of conversing with Deverel, and was ever reminding him of their bygone days of vagrancy.

Yvonne was a woman who must have some one to love her. Her love consisted in the desire of being loved. She never had any affection for Mateo, but she thought that he loved her; and this belief, notwithstanding all his faults, caused her to live with him without complaining of the solitary life she lived, hid amongst the mountains on the Isthmus. Bad as she knew Mateo Barri to be, she was a little vain of his love.

It certainly was not much cause for pride. She had ever remembered Andrew Deverel, and the days they had passed together seemed the happiest part of her existence.

On meeting him, and finding him even more than fancy had ever led her to believe, her girlish fancy for him easily and suddenly awakened.

Before landing in New Orleans, she thought that the love of Andrew Deverel would be all that she could desire for happiness in this world or in the next.

Deverel saw with much annoyance her growing partiality for his society, and strove as much as possible to shun her; but while on the steamer, to keep altogether from her sight was difficult, for Yvonne loved him as but few except Italian women can love, and she took no trouble to conceal it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXCURSION NORTH.

IN August of the year following their return from Europe, Mr. Lorney took Laura and Miss Orr to pay a visit to Mr. Grey in New York, according to a promise when they parted. Augustus Bliss came with them. Laura and Mary Grey were delighted to meet again, for a very warm friendship had sprung up between them after the manner of young ladies. They all left New York, and proceeded to Saratoga and Niagara. On reaching the springs they found John Grey, who had come up from his village to join them.

‘Miss Lorney,’ said the bachelor, ‘do you remember that, on the way to Liverpool last year, I promised you a young man for a husband?’

‘Certainly, Mr. Grey,’ said Laura. ‘I have not forgotten your promise, or that I won the young man by lot. I am waiting for him very patiently.’

‘I am expecting to see him every day. Two weeks ago I received a letter from him, stating that he was intending to start for this part of the world. I have no doubt but what he is now in New York, and he will certainly follow me here, and I promise that, before you return south, you shall see him.’

‘How very fortunate you are, Laura!’ said Mary Grey.

‘He is the only man of all my acquaintances to whom I would give a daughter if troubled with one.’

‘I am becoming impatient to see him,’ said Laura, ‘for if he is such a wonderful person as you describe, he is worth coming all the way from New Orleans to see.’

More than eight months had passed since Laura had heard from her unknown lover, and she had begun to think that the romance with him was over, and that he had forgotten her. She was sorry, for she had invested a great deal of romance in him.

Augustus thought himself in a manner bound to do something towards accomplishing the desires of his departed aunt. Acting under the influence of this opinion, he had lately been trying to make himself agreeable, but every effort had resulted in increasing Laura’s dislike for him.

‘Now, Mr. Grey—honour bright,’ said Laura, ‘is he really the wonderful young man you used to describe to us, or only somebody

whom you have bespoken to appear in that character for this occasion only ?’

‘He is the very young man himself, and no other, and I think so well of him that I would be glad to see a daughter of my own married to him, if I were so fortunate as to be possessed of one to plague me.’

‘What may be his name ?’ said Augustus.

‘Pardon me, I will not do him that injustice ; let him come and make an unbiassed impression. I have of course a due respect for your sagacity.’

‘Some awful down-easter or wild man from the backwoods, with shockingly clumsy boots, and feet beyond the permission of ugliness,’ said Augustus Bliss the dandy cousin ; ‘hands accustomed to splitting rails, stubbing up trees, hedging and ditching ; tall, ungainly, slouching, with round shoulders, and afraid to look a woman in the face ; his dress—ah ! it will be a

curious study to see his ideas of civilised costume and a Sunday best. Seriously, Mr. Grey, are not these the signs by which we may your true love know?’

Miss Orr laughed, Laura looked annoyed, and Mr. Grey fixed the young man with a quizzical look, under which he did not feel comfortable.

‘Have I ever seen him, uncle?’ said Mary Grey.

‘I should not say that it was likely,’ replied her uncle, drily.

‘Why do you not bid me as well as Laura keep disengaged till I have seen him, then?’

‘You can do so if you choose.’

‘Well, but——’

‘Mr. Lorney, I am with you if you are disengaged for half an hour.’

The two gentlemen went into the verandah together, leaving the young ladies and Mr.

Augustus to continue or conclude their conversation.

Days passed on; Andrew Deverel did not make his appearance, but many other admirers did.

Laura was greatly admired, but Mr. Grey was always on the watch, and contrived to keep the field open for his young friend. The other two young ladies were left to their own discretion, and Miss Mary Grey was removed from the possibility of rivalry by accepting the offer of a young planter of Alabama, on whom her uncle bestowed the commendation of being only second to his unknown hero; but as the young lady considered him better than anybody else could possibly be, she was quite content.

‘Now, if that fool of a dandy cousin would only take to that foolish Miss Orr, they would suit each other, and Andrew would have a fair

field before him; but the lad has not surmounted so many difficulties to be wrecked as he reaches port.

‘Where is he?— and why is he not here before now? He deserves to win that nice girl, and he shall have her if I can help him. Surely she will never be persuaded to marry that fool in tight boots.’

In the beginning of September the party resolved to leave Saratoga for Niagara, going by way of Lake Ontario; Mr. Woodville, the young planter, requested and received Mr. Grey’s permission to accompany them.

‘You see Mary has not visited the springs for nothing, Miss Laura, whilst you are only a month older since you came,’ said John Grey to Laura, gravely, as Mary and her fiancé walked together in the verandah.

‘I am waiting for your friend,’ said Laura, gaily. ‘I dare not decide on anyone whilst

there is such an unseen paragon in reserve.'

'I trust you will not have long to wait,' said Mr. Grey. 'I received a letter for him this morning addressed to my care, bearing the London postmark; so you see that others besides myself are counting on his arrival.'

Mr. Grey then, in a grave kindly way, talked a long time to Laura, and though she did not confide to him the secret of her unknown correspondent, she was quite frank about her cousin Augustus, told him of her mother's plans, and ended by candidly declaring that ever since she had detested him every day more and more. In this disposition Mr. Grey quietly confirmed her, and then, with his mind set at rest on that point, he grew more impatient and perplexed at the delay of Andrew's arrival.

The party, accompanied by Woodville, left Saratoga on the following day. They reached

Lake Ontario and embarked on a steamer, and had a delightful trip on that beautiful lake to the city of Toronto, from which place they went to the Falls of Niagara, on the Canadian side.

Mr. Lorney, like most of the Southern planters, had ever possessed an opinion very unfavourable to the agriculturists of the North. Every day since leaving New York, he had seen evidence to remove this prejudice, and to convince him that the possession of slaves was not everywhere necessary or even desirable amongst those who follow the occupation of cultivating the earth.

CHAPTER V.

YVONNE.

ON landing in New Orleans, Deverel parted with Manby, who started up the river for St. Louis. On the day he landed, he learnt that Mr. Lorney and his daughter had gone on a tour to the Northern States, and he resolved to follow them immediately.

The evening before his departure he received a note from Yvonne entreating him to call and see her.

He went to the Spanish hotel where she was staying, and found her in nearly as much sorrow as on the night Mateo Barri was killed.

‘What has happened now, Yvonne?’ said he.
‘You are weeping.’

‘Si, I have cry one gréat mucho all dis day,’ said Yvonne.

‘Why? You ought to be very happy with the thought of going to Italy.’

‘Dis is por why I cry. I sal see you no el otro ves. You go much away, and I too, and sometin here,’ said she, placing her hand over her heart, ‘bato a rebato; ma nessun risponde.’

Deverel, wishing to divert her thoughts to some other subject, said in Italian, ‘Yvonne, you are talking in three different languages. Why do you not talk as you did years ago, when speaking to Beatrice and me?’

‘I will,’ said she, speaking in her mother tongue. ‘I used then to talk to you of love. Do you ask me to do it now, and you going away to leave me?’

‘I have business that takes me to the North, and you wish to go to Italy. We must part.’

‘I do not wish to go ; but you wish to leave me, as you did before. You shall not. I cannot part with you, Andrea.’

‘Yvonne ! you seem to have forgotten the past.’

‘I do remember, and that is one reason why you shall not go, Andrea ! Do you hate me ?’

‘No, Yvonne ! I do not hate you now, and hope that you will never give me any cause to do so. You have been very unfortunate, and I pity you.’

‘Tell me truly, Andrea, do you love another ?’

‘Yes.’

‘Poor Yvonne ! she must die. There is nothing on earth for her.’

‘Do not speak thus ; I too love with but

little hope; yet I would live for the joy of owning that love, although it may never be returned.'

'I see something,' said Yvonne, 'and it makes me happy. If I were to die I could love you no more. You cannot prevent me from loving you. I will live.'

'The more resigned you seem to the fate that separates us, the higher you will rise in my esteem.'

'Ah, Andrea, those are cruel words for one to hear who loves like me!'

'Can cruel words make you hate me?'

'No.'

'Then I will not use them, since they are more unpleasant to me than to you.'

'You wish me to hate you, then? You are trying to kill my love.'

'Yes, for your own sake, if hate is more pleasant to bear than love unrequited.'

‘Then go. Leave me, and I will try to do as you wish. I must either love or hate.’

‘Can we not be friends, and nothing more?’ said Deverel, with a strong feeling of pity as he thought of the past.

‘No; we shall meet no more,’ said Yvonne; I will go to Italy. Yet I should like to hear from you sometimes—to know that you are happy—to think that you are with some one who loves you.’

‘Will you write to me when I am far away?’

‘Yes. Give me an address, and I will write to you with pleasure. I shall try to find Beatrice; but I know not where I shall live. Give me an address, and I will write to you, and let you know how a letter will reach me.’

‘Thanks, Yvonne; and tell me in your letter all about Beatrice.’

Deverel then gave her his name and the

address of John Grey, to whose care her letter should be directed.

The tone in which his last words were uttered fell harshly on the ears of Yvonne.

She learnt by it, that he was pleased with her intention of going to Italy; and knowledge like that, to one like her, was fire in the soul.

They parted with feelings of restraint and coldness; although in the mind of one was a strong sentiment of friendship, and in the other a burning passion of love.

Yvonne did not intend to go to Italy. She was not a woman who could calmly resign herself to the fate of being neglected. Her passions were wholly unguided by reason, and a rival with her was a mortal enemy. Her business was now to find out who was her rival.

She resolved to follow Deverel to the North, and trust to circumstances for some oppor-

tunity to prevent his hopes being realised. Henceforward her actions were to be inspired by love, jealousy, and wounded vanity, which so clouded her mind that she did not see that they alone were sufficient to prevent her from ever being loved by the one for whom those feelings had arisen.

Yvonne commenced preparations for her journey north.

She had money, and resolved that the journey should be made in a style that should command respect. She resolved to take with her one or two servants.

There was a widow woman in New Orleans who wished to dispose of some slaves, but did not wish to have them sold at public auction. From this widow Yvonne bought two servants; one a girl about nineteen years of age, who was nearly white and rather good-looking.

The other servant purchased by Yvonne was a youth of about seventeen, who was very dark and bright.

With these servants Yvonne started on her journey. Her first business was to find John Grey at the address Deverel had given her, thinking he would be able to tell her where Deverel was to be found.

On reaching that place she called at the office of the miller.

‘I received a letter from Mr. Grey this morning,’ said a clerk, in answer to her enquiries; ‘he is at Niagara Falls.’

‘Andrea will be there too,’ thought Yvonne, as she left the office.

CHAPTER VI.

DEVEREL MEETS JOHN GREY.

THE day after parting from Yvonne, Andrew started for New York.

Upon reaching that city he made no delay, but hastened to Saratoga Springs.

On reaching Saratoga, he learnt that those he wished to see had gone to Niagara Falls, and two hours after he was on the road to find them there.

He reached Niagara Falls, on the American side, in the evening, and soon learnt that those he sought could not be on that side of the river. He resolved not to cross the river

until the next morning, and went to have his first view of one of Nature's greatest wonders, the Falls of Niagara, under the shade of night.

The next morning Andrew Deverel crossed the river to the Canada side; and when mounting the steps in front of the 'Clifton House,' he saw his friend John Grey sitting under the balcony reading his paper.

John Grey was always a happy man; but he was under an unusual state of pleasant excitement on meeting with Andrew Deverel.

'She is here,' said the bachelor, after taking Deverel up to his room. 'She is here, and she is not an angel, thank Heaven, but she is everything that a man can wish for in a wife. I believe you are just in time. I have had many fears for you. There is a puppy here that she does not like, and yet there is a little danger that he might have got her had you

not come immediately. He has some sort of claim on her that I can't understand; but now you are come, all will be right. I have been expecting you for two weeks.'

'I was simple enough to come from Chagres to New Orleans, or I should have been here much sooner. I should have known that the chance of meeting anyone I wished to see in New Orleans at this time of year was very doubtful.'

'Yes; you should have come direct to me. I need not ask you if you have been fortunate. Of course you have, or you would not have returned so soon. You are a lucky fellow, and I suppose you have not made less than ten thousand dollars.'

'Multiply that by twenty, and the sum will be about what I have with me.'

'What! Two hundred thousand dollars. How on earth could you make that in so short

a time? Why! you are worth more than I am, and I have been twenty-five years in business. I cannot understand it.'

'I have been speculating wildly, and have been fortunate.'

'Well! I am astonished. Here, read this letter,' said John Grey, 'while I think the matter over. I can't understand it. Two hundred thousand dollars in a little over two years! You have been seeing the world and making dollars, while I was slaving for cents.'

Deverel took the letter; it was from Middleton, who was in London.

The letter ran as follows:—

St. James's Square,
London, Aug. 1852.

'FRIEND DEVEREL,

'Enclosed you will find a draft on New York for five hundred dollars. On

my return home I found that a great change had taken place in my affairs during my absence ; and in consequence I have given up all thoughts of ever going back to New Guinea. I told you some of the circumstances under which I left England. My brother returned home as he intended, and commenced legal proceedings against our step-mother and her dishonest husband.

‘ My brother was aided by uncle Richard, and they obtained fifty-five thousand pounds, fifteen thousand of which was for me, and was placed at interest awaiting my return.

‘ For some reason my uncle Richard Leighton took a dislike to my cousin Henry, who was killed in New Guinea ; and when he died three years ago, it was found that his will was in my favour.

‘ Write to me often ; I shall ever be pleased

to hear from you; and if ever you come to England, be sure and call on me.

‘ Respectfully yours,

‘ RICHARD LEIGHTON MIDDLETON.’

‘ Have you sufficiently recovered your astonishment to be able to converse?’ asked Deverel as he put the letter in his pocket.

‘ I have not got over my astonishment, although I am not speechless,’ said the bachelor. ‘ I think you have been the luckiest man I ever knew.’

‘ Did I not tell you on the night of our first meeting that you must hope and act? The most difficult part of your task is done. You are a man, and she does not like dandies. Her father is a sensible man, and he will not object to you as a son-in law. At one time it seemed unlikely you ever would become even on speaking terms with any of the family,

and now that can hardly be prevented, for I am intimately acquainted with father and daughter. I shall not allow you to leave me, so you will have to become acquainted with them whether you like it or not.'

'I must resign myself to your leading,' said Deverel. 'I have had no occasion hitherto to regret being guided by you. When shall I see her?'

'Do not be too impatient. Much depends on first impressions. I have told her that I was daily expecting a person whom I have chosen for her future husband. I do not like to introduce you now as that person, and I regret that your name has ever been mentioned. For me to introduce you by your proper name is equivalent to saying, "here is the man I promised you; take him." That will not do. Let us take a walk down by the side of the river, and we will talk over the business.'

CHAPTER VII.

LAURA'S FIRST MEETING WITH DEVEREL.

IN the summer days, the morning and evening are the pleasantest times to loiter along the banks of the Niagara river. This fact even Augustus Bliss had learnt, and on the morning our hero met John Grey he went with Miss Lorney for a walk, in which they were accompanied by Woodville and Mary Grey.

Mr. Bliss had the day before resolved to propose to Laura, whom he could not love, and to relinquish all further thoughts of the talented Caroline Orr, who had highly excited his admiration.

Laura's First Meeting with Deverel. 63

Wandering within the pine groves on the banks of that beautiful river, Mr. Bliss and Laura separated from their companions, who did not appear to make any extra exertions to keep in their company.

‘Lowree,’ said Augustus, ‘I have for some time been wishing to speak to you on business of importance, and perhaps a better opportunity than the present may never occur. I believe that it is as well known to you as to myself that for some time previous to your mother’s death she was anxious that we should sometime be united.’

‘Cousin Augustus,’ said Laura, ‘are you thinking about proposing marriage to me?’

‘Yes, that is just what I was intending to do.’

‘Pray do not, for I shall refuse you. I tell you this to save an unpleasant scene. We can be good friends as we are now. Do not try to

be anything more or less, and we shall both be happier.'

'Are you in earnest Lowree?' said Bliss with much astonishment.

'I never was more so in my life.'

'I am delectated to hear you say so. I am indeed.'

'Then why were you going to propose?'

'Because I promised your mother that I would. I knew that you did not like me. We cannot agree on anything, and it is well that we have now come to an explanation.'

Laura took a firmer hold of her companion's arm, and a stronger feeling of friendship arose than they had felt for each other since they were children. They continued their walk talking pleasantly on indifferent subjects.

By an abrupt turning of the path, they suddenly met John Grey, accompanied by a stranger.

Laura's First Meeting with Deverel. 65

Each of the four persons who thus met seemed a little disconcerted.

John Grey exchanged a few words with Bliss and Laura, and he and his companion passed on.

‘By Jove!’ exclaimed the bachelor to Deverel, ‘I fear that you are too late. That man is the puppy of whom I told you. They are on better terms now than I ever saw them before. I have been observing them closely for the last two weeks, and I tell you that they have come to some understanding this morning.’

‘Did you ever see a creature so lovely?’ exclaimed Deverel.

‘She is indeed very beautiful, but I am afraid you will lose her.’

‘I am not. I *will* not lose her except by death. She is mine, and has been ever since I first saw her. That fellow is, as you say, a puppy. Every feature of his face, his dress,

and the eye-glass show it. If she can love him there is nothing approaching perfection on earth, and I will never speak to woman again. She cannot love him. She was created for me and I for her.'

'That is right, my friend. Never carry a faint heart about with you. The only way to win is to try, but I tell you that you must act immediately.'

After meeting John Grey and his companion, Laura Lorney walked with her cousin in silence. In vain he strove to engage her attention on the subjects of their former conversation; she replied in monosyllables, and said 'no' when she should have said 'yes.'

Laura had formed a picture in her mind of her unknown lover. The man she had just met with John Grey was the reality of that ideal picture.

'That man,' thought Laura, 'is my unknown lover, or if he is not he ought to be. I now

Laura's First Meeting with Deverel. 67

know the reason why he has not written to me lately. He has been intending to return.' She saw the absurdity of thinking thus, yet she could not throw off the idea, nor was she displeased with her inability to do so. Another idea then occurred to her. The stranger might be the man John Grey was expecting to meet him—the one he had promised to her. She hoped not, yet could give no proper reason for that hope, except that she was interested in her unknown correspondent and did not wish the romance to be destroyed.

Then she thought that her unknown lover and the friend of John Grey might be the same. This was possible, and if so there was an additional interest in the romance in which she fancied herself involved.

Such were the thoughts that made her appear more absent than Augustus Bliss had ever seen her before.

He thought that her vanity was wounded because he had expressed some pleasure that she had rejected him ; which certainly was not very flattering.

This was about the most profound reflection Augustus Bliss had ever made.

‘ Lowree,’ said he, ‘ I know that you are a good-hearted girl and veera deefereent to most others. I thought that while rejecting me you would feel no plesure in knowing that my feelings were much eenjured by your refusal of my hand. For that reason I spoke as I did. Will you forgive me ?’

‘ Certainly not,’ said Laura, preoccupied with her own thoughts.

Mr. Bliss was somewhat annoyed at her reply, for he thought that he had made an ample apology, and he became as silent as herself, and thought of the amiable and accomplished Caroline Orr.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAPPY DAYS.

THAT evening Andrew Deverel was introduced to the rest of the party, and, as the friend of John Grey, was well received by all. Mr. Lorney was very much pleased with his appearance, for the reason that he so little resembled other young men.

During the evening Laura was silent, and seemed absent and preoccupied. John Grey thought that he had never seen her so stupid before. Laura was vainly trying to comprehend the mystery of Andrew Deverel. During the evening she had an opportunity

of speaking unheard by others to the bachelor.

‘Is this the young man you have promised me?’

‘This man is a native of the village where I live,’ answered Mr. Grey, ‘and is certainly a very fine young fellow.’

‘That does not answer my question,’ said Laura. ‘I’ll ask you another. What name did you call this man?’

The bachelor hesitated a little, and then answered ‘Deverel.’

‘I thought so,’ said Laura. ‘That is the name you gave the friend whom you promised me eighteen months ago, when we were on the voyage to Liverpool. He appears to me everything you described him.’

‘I am glad to hear you say so. I am not surprised. He was much struck with your appearance this morning, but I gave him to

understand that he had but very little, or no chance.'

Laura made no answer, but over her features came an expression that told John Grey that she was not engaged to her cousin, and that she did not wish to be.

The next day the Lorneys and Greys were going to cross to the American side of the river, and they invited Andrew Deverel to accompany them, which invitation he, of course, accepted. Augustus Bliss now devoted much of his time to Caroline Orr. Mary Grey and Woodville were occupied with each other.

Mr. Lorney and John Grey were most of the time in each other's society. William Grey (Mary's father) was a great politician, and passed his time in reading newspapers, or in political arguments with strangers.

In the afternoon, whilst walking on the bank of the river with Laura, Deverel met his old friend Henry Froud.

Henry grasped his hand, highly excited by the pleasure of seeing him.

‘I was afraid I should never see you again,’ said he, ‘and I have been so anxious to learn something about the expedition. Did you go where you intended?’

‘Yes,’ answered Deverel, and to divert the conversation to some other subject, he asked, ‘Did you get home in time?’

‘Yes, just in time. Had I been away a day longer I should have been too late. Did you land in the country?’

‘Yes. Did you find your family well on your return?’

‘No, all of them were hungry, and my father was otherwise unwell, but he is much better now. Did you go up the country?’

‘No. Do you feel any ill effects from your wound?’

‘Not the slightest. It has been all right these six months. Did the natives show fight?’

‘Yes. Where are you staying?’

‘At the St. Lawrence. Was there——’

‘At what time will you be at home there?’

‘One o’clock,’ answered Henry.

‘I’ll call there at that hour, and we will have a talk over old times.’

‘Very well. I’ll wait for you.’

‘Good morning.’

‘Good day for the present,’ said Deverel, and each resumed his walk.

As Deverel and Laura became more acquainted with each other, Laura gave up the idea that he was her unknown lover, although each time she saw him the resemblance between him and her ideal seemed stronger.

She gave up that notion because she could never draw from him the most distant allusion to his ever having seen or heard of her before they met at Niagara Falls.

At one o'clock Deverel went to the St. Lawrence as he had promised, and found Henry Froud waiting for him.

‘Pardon me for being a little rude and inquisitive this morning,’ said Henry, ‘but I was very anxious to hear about the result of your expedition. I have thought about you many times every day, and dreamt of being with you in the expedition every night. Had I not been lame, and had reason to suppose that my people were hungry, and cursing me for deserting them, I should certainly have gone with you.’

Deverel then gave him a brief account of the failure of the expedition, to which Henry listened with much interest.

‘How I should like to have been with you,’ said he, when Deverel concluded. ‘Will you ever try it again?’

‘No, I shall probably never go again, although my desire to do so is stronger than before. What I have seen has only increased my desire to see more, but I shall not go again.’

‘I am sorry to hear you say so, for I want something to do.’

‘Why do you not work on your father’s farm?’ asked Deverel.

‘Because a man can be hired for sixteen dollars a month who can do more work than I can. After being in California, it is not interesting to work hard on a farm for the sake of saving so little. I want to be in some more exciting occupation than following a plough.’

‘I am afraid that your trip to California

has injured you more than the money you obtained there has done good.'

'I have some fears that you are right; however, I can't help it. The next time you are going on any such pleasure excursion as that to New Guinea, and want any company, will you let me know?'

'Yes, I will do so, but advise you to find some occupation while waiting; for I hope that you will have to wait for several years, and then be disappointed.'

Henry promised to follow his advice, and as he wished to return home that afternoon, they shook hands and parted.

A week passed in which Deverel was much in the society of Laura.

There is a charm in the early acquaintance with those we love that cannot be compared with anything else in life. When we have been long familiar with the society of some

loved one, the happiness found in that society may become stronger and more deeply seated in the soul, but the charm of learning the peculiarities of thought in the first changing of ideas and the delightful excitement of hopes and fears is no longer met.

CHAPTER IX.

MEETING BETWEEN HANNIBAL AND BRUTUS.

HANNIBAL was a slave born on the estate of Mr. Bliss. He has before been mentioned in this history.

Amongst the many idle people striving to kill time pleasantly at the Falls of Niagara, Hannibal was the envy of all the coloured people in the village, free and slaves.

Hannibal had his cares and sorrows as well as others. He loved, and was far away, as he thought, from the object of that love.

He was a slave. He had some knowledge, and Nature never intended that knowledge

and slavery should meet in the same person. They are as much opposed to each other as fire and water, and in the soul where they meet there ever arise unpleasant commotions.

Hannibal knew but very little about earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. His only knowledge of this consisted in having seen many people black and white who were obliged to toil, and he had envied them the pleasure of having to provide for themselves.

One day while loitering along the riverside, he was astonished at hearing in a familiar tone the words, 'S'elp me heving, dar's Hannibal.'

He looked up and saw an old acquaintance, a coloured youth and fellow-slave from New Orleans.

'Brute,' said Hannibal, rushing up and catching him by the hand, 'has your mistress come north? Is she here?'

‘Dar you ah,’ said Brutus, ‘only glad to see an ole fren, caus he knows sussen of some one else. Now is n’t dat de troof?’

‘No Brutus,’ said Hannibal, ‘I am pleased to see you for yourself; but of course there is one more, only one, that I would like to see better. You know we must not be ungallant to the fair sex.’

‘Ob course not,’ said Brutus.

‘Well! why do n’t you relieve my anxiety?’

‘I has ben sold,’ said Brutus.

On seeing Brutus the hopes of Hannibal had gone up like a rocket, but on hearing the words ‘I has ben sold,’ they suddenly fell in darkness.

‘Here is a seat,’ said Hannibal, ‘sit down and tell me all about it. How did you leave Bella?’

‘Open your mouf for bad news,’ said Brutus, taking a seat.

‘Well! what is it? Don’t keep me in this suspense.’

‘Missus broke up her ’stablishment, and Belly is sold too. Dar, now you hab it.’

‘Sold! sold!!’ exclaimed Hannibal. ‘Where has she gone?’

‘God knows whar,’ answered Brutus in a sympathising tone. ‘I war fotched hare.’

‘My God, what shall I do,’ exclaimed Hannibal. ‘I wish I was dead. I *do* wish that I *was* dead!’

‘Wait awhile,’ said Brutus, ‘I spec you’ll die bom-bye.’

When Hannibal’s grief had a little subsided, he requested Brutus to tell him everything circumstantially that had transpired.

‘Sartin, sartin, dat’s jus what I’s gwine to do, ef you’d let me,’ said Brutus. ‘You see missus took it in her head to go norf to lib, and did n’t want no servants, so she sold us. A

furrin woman bought me and fotched me hare ; but I do n't think mush ob her, she spokes sich disgussen bad British.'

'But do n't you know who bought poor Bella ?' asked Hannibal.

'Ob course I do.'

'And do you know where she is now ?'

'Knows whar she is? Sartin I do.'

'I thought you said that you did not know.'

'Scuse me. I said God knows whar ; but you didn't gib me time to say dat I know too.'

'Well ! where is she ?'

'Yas, I'm jus guine to told you. Now aint you glad to see me ?'

'Yes Brutus, I certainly am,' said Hannibal, to humor him.

'You'd oughter to be, caus I'm allers woollen to blige you in any way, or blige any man.'

'Where are you going ?' asked Hannibal.

'Come along and ax no quesions, and you shall see.'

Hannibal followed him into the servants' department of a second-class public-house.

'Hare's whar I lib,' said Brutus; 'will you take a char; and please scuse the presence ob my absence one munnit?'

Brutus left the room, and soon after returned with a beautiful young woman.

There were the exclamations 'Bella!'—'Hannibal!' and the next instant Hannibal was holding her in his arms.

Hannibal stayed an hour with Bella, and promised to call again in the evening.

On leaving he was accompanied by Brutus, who was going out on business for his mistress, which he seemed to be a little puzzled how to perform.

'You am a man ob the world, Hannibal,' said he, 'and I want you to gub me some advise.'

‘All right Brutus,’ said Hannibal, ‘I’ll do what I can for you with pleasure.’

‘I know’d you would, and dat’s one reason why I ax advise. Another reason is, caus I want it. Missus hab sent me out to find the whar’bouts ob a genelum named John Grey, or the debil, or bofe ob dem.’

‘You could not have come for advice to a better man. Mr. Grey, and the debil, as you call him, and I, are staying at the same hotel. They are of our party.’

‘I declar I’m a lucky boy. I hab got a hul day and noffin to do. Missus can’t spec dat I’ll found them so s pry.’

Hannibal had some diplomatic talent. He wished his visits to Bella should not be displeasing to her mistress. ‘Brutus,’ said he, ‘will you do me another favor?’

‘Sartin,’ answered Brutus.

‘Then tell your mistress that a gentleman from New Orleans will call on Bella this evening, and that he can give her all the information she requires about Mr. Grey or Mr. Deverel.’

‘I’ll do so to ’blige you, Hannibal, though dat will make the smartness ob Brutus some smaller.’

‘I can’t see that. You might not be able to find them but for me; and much praise is due to you for finding one who can tell her.’

‘Dat am a fac; and I’ll tell her jes what you say.’

‘When Brutus returned to his mistress, who as the reader has already supposed was Yvonne, she enquired what success he had met with.

‘Berry good, Missus. I hab done berry well,’ answered Brutus.

‘Why for doan you say to me fore dey be?’ asked Yvonne.

‘Whar da ah? I don’t know dat.’

‘Den why for you say to me verree good? Tell to me dat.’

‘I hab’ found a genelum from New Orleans, an ole fren ob mine, and a ticular fren ob Belly. He am gwine to call this evening to see Belly, and he can gib you all the inflammation you want bout Mr. Grey or the debil.’

‘A friend from Nuoleen. Est he ane servant?’

‘Yas.’

Yvonne was well pleased with what Brutus had done, for his friend might be a servant in the family of her rival.

When Hannibal called in the evening, he was invited up to see Yvonne.

Had she required any information concerning his master, Hannibal would not have given it; but he was under no obligation to others, and wishing to gain the good-will of Yvonne, he

gave her all the information she required as far as his knowledge allowed him to do.

In the course of half an hour's conversation she was convinced that the name of her rival was Laura Lorney; and that Andrew Deverel had yet the task before him of winning her affections.

That task Yvonne resolved to make as difficult as possible.

Before Hannibal left the house Bella told him that his visits to her were not displeasing to her mistress, and that he might call often.

CHAPTER X.

YVONNE SETS A SNARE.

YVONNE was unfortunate. Just as she had decided on a plan of action, she learnt from Hannibal that the excursion party were about to start for New York, from which place Mr. Lorney and his daughter would depart immediately for New Orleans. This information was given her one morning, and they were to start the next.

Yvonne instructed Hannibal to try to ascertain before he returned in the evening whether Mr Deverel was also going to New Orleans. This Hannibal was able to learn

from his master, and on his return in the evening he informed her that Mr. Deverel would not go to New Orleans at present, but would stay a month or two with John Grey.

Hannibal parted with Bella, but before leaving he was told by Yvonne that he should soon have an opportunity of seeing her again.

Some may think that the affections of a modest right-thinking young girl should not be won in a few days by one with whom she was previously unacquainted, but the experiences of this world show that when such girls meet with the right persons, they will act in a manner that many of their acquaintances would call imprudent. This was the case with Laura Lorney. When before parting with her, Andrew Deverel asked permission to visit her in New Orleans, the request was granted with much pleasure, and on parting from her and her father, at New York, he had reason to

believe that his hopes would meet with success.

Andrew Deverel went with John Grey to pay a visit for a few weeks to his native village. He had been there but a few days when he received a note from Yvonne, requesting him to call on her at an hotel in the village.

With much regret that Yvonne had not proceeded to Europe as she had promised, Deverel went to the hotel.

‘Yvonne,’ said Deverel, when seated in her room, ‘you have deceived me. You told me that you would go to Italy. Why do I meet you here?’

‘Do not reproach me, Andrea,’ said Yvonne in Italian. ‘I could not go. I could not go so far away from you.’

‘Yvonne, do you really love me?’ asked Deverel.

‘Oh! so much, I cannot tell you. There is

not another thought in my soul, but love for you.'

'Such being the state of your mind, could you listen to words of love from another? Could another compel you to love him?'

'No, I should be disgusted with and hate another who would talk to me of love. I can only love but you.'

'Be careful, Yvonne. You condemn yourself. I love another as much as you can love me.'

'No other can love you as I do. It is not in nature for two to bear such love for one. My claim is first and superior to that of any other.'

'Yvonne, can you forget me and love another? Give me a direct answer.'

'No, and I shall never try.'

'How then can you expect that I will ever forget another and love you?'

‘Then I will die myself, or kill that other.’

‘Silence!’ shouted Deverel. ‘Never dare to speak or think of that again. Never seek an interview with me again. We now part I hope for ever.’

‘Stay!’ said Yvonne, throwing herself before him. ‘Forgive me. I am wild and know not what I am saying. Can you not even pity me?’

‘I do pity you sincerely.’

‘And is that all? Is there no hope for me?’

‘Not the slightest. Pity is the softest emotion I can have for you.’

‘Then I will go to Italy.’

‘So you promised in New Orleans, and deceived me.’

‘Yes, and I will tell you why. You told me that you loved with but little hope. I thought that by seeing you again, I might find that that little hope was all gone, and that you

might then think of poor Yvonne. Thinking thus I could not go to Italy until I had seen you again.'

'I wish you now to understand that I love with hope. Do you wish me to hate you?'

'Ah! no, no!'

'Then never trouble me again. Whatever friendship I once had for you, this interview has nearly destroyed.'

'Do not say any more, Andrea; I will go to Italy, but what shall I do when I get there? Without friends or money I shall starve, and the sooner the better.'

'No, Yvonne, you need not starve. I will give you what money will keep you for ten years, and long before then you should have a good husband.'

'Andrea, do not insult me. Do not offer me money.'

‘Do not misunderstand me, Yvonne; I do not wish to insult you, but I feel for you some friendship and much pity. I offer you money, thinking you may need it, and knowing that I can spare it.’

Yvonne was silent for a minute, during which time her mind was very busy. She replied, ‘I will think of what you have said. I do not ask to see you again; but before I leave I will write to you. This interview is painful to you, and we will part.’

They did part, and Andrew Deverel left her with the hope that he should never see her again.

The next day he received a note from Yvonne, stating that she had been thinking of his proposal, and that she would like to know more fully what he proposed, and the exact terms of his offer.

The business-like style of this letter gave Deverel a worse opinion of Yvonne than he ever had before. To him it seemed that money would remove the sorrow of her disappointed love; he was mistaken. Yvonne was an artful scheming woman, but avarice did not dictate the note she sent Deverel. She had determined that if she could not get him, no other should. The thought that the one she loved would ever be happy with another was agony to her. Her object was to make him as hopeless and despairing in his love as she was herself, and the note to Deverel was part of her plan. In answer to her note Deverel sent the following words:—

‘YVONNE,—If you go to Italy you shall have a passage paid and two thousand dollars. Call on Mr. G. L. Barenlo, attorney, No—

in Wall Street, New York. He will see that a passage is procured for you, and after you have embarked will pay you the money.

‘A. DEVEREL.’

The next day Yvonne left the hotel, but six weeks afterwards, when Deverel saw his attorney in New York, she had not called on him, or given any intimation of her intentions to depart.

Cold disagreeable weather was then setting in, and Deverel began to make preparations for journeying to a more agreeable latitude.

Before he left John Grey, the bachelor gave him a letter addressed to Mr. Lorney.

‘This letter,’ said he, ‘is to be delivered to Mr. Lorney at the time you think most proper. I suppose you intend to ask him for his daughter?’

‘Yes,’ said Deverel, ‘I hope that such a request will be necessary.’

‘In this letter,’ said the bachelor, ‘I have endorsed your pretensions as much as I can, consistently with truth. Give it to him whenever you think best.’

Deverel thanked him for his kindness and started on his journey.

CHAPTER XI.

A LOVER MADE HAPPY.

THE light of joy that beamed in the eyes of Laura Lorney when she again met Deverel was too bright to be unnoticed, nor could he be mistaken in the cause.

The reception given him by Mr. Lorney was everything that a lover could desire, for the planter insisted that Deverel should reside with them during his visit to New Orleans.

A servant was appointed to wait on him, and the best horse in the stable was ever ready for his use.

Mr. Lorney suspected the object of Andrew's

visit, and took much trouble, by conversing with him on various subjects, to become well acquainted with his character and mental abilities. The result was favourable to Deverel; Mr. Lorney imagined himself to be an excellent judge of human nature, and he formed a good opinion of his visitor.

Andrew Deverel's progress in winning the affections of Laura equalled his hopes. She was of a free-souled confiding nature, and could not well conceal strong emotions.

Andrew Deverel soon saw that his hopes were nearly realized. He proposed, and had the joy of hearing that he was loved by her for whom he had so long worked and waited.

At his next interview with Mr. Lorney, Deverel handed him the letter from John Grey; it was as follows:—

‘ November 10, 1852.

‘ DEAR SIR,—My friend Deverel is going to visit you for the purpose of trying to win your daughter for a wife. I take so great an interest in his welfare and in that of your daughter, that I am (although unrequested) going to use my little influence to aid him. I have been acquainted with him nearly three years, and in that time have seen nothing to condemn and much to admire in his character. I have had business transactions with him and found him to be strictly honourable. I believe that he is sincere in his attachment to your daughter, and that he is not an adventurer seeking to marry a fortune, for he has one of his own.

‘ Yours truly,

‘ JOHN GREY.

‘ To Mr. George Lorney.’

‘ I do not know the contents of that letter,’ said Deverel when Mr. Lorney had finished reading it, ‘ but I understood it was written to aid me in the request I am about to make. I wish to marry your daughter.’

‘ I have already suspected,’ said Mr. Lorney, ‘ that you designed to take Laura from me. I suppose that she will sometime leave my protection for that of another. I cannot expect to keep her much longer. I have not been acquainted with you long, but I have formed a very favourable opinion of you. It is possible that I may be mistaken, but from my present opinion I would trust the future happiness of my daughter to you in preference to any other man with whom I am acquainted. If she chooses to accept you I shall make no objections.’

‘ She does choose to accept me,’ said

Deverel, 'and the care of my future days shall be to make myself worthy of the confidence you both place in me.'

Deverel urged Laura to appoint an early day for their union. This Laura promised to do, and that day two months was finally agreed upon. This to him did not seem a very early day; however he was obliged to be content, and he reluctantly departed to await at New York that happy time when he could return and claim her for his own.

To pass the next two months, he resolved to visit Havana, and sailed for that port in the first steamer. After reaching Havana he amused himself for a week by riding about in a 'volante,' and in writing letters. He wrote to Middleton, to John Grey, to Henry Froud, to his attorney in New York, and often to Laura Lorney, but with all the happiness caused by the hopes of

the future, time seemed to pass slowly, and to quicken it he resolved to visit Jamaica and other of the West India Islands.

Before the two months expired, Laura lost her companion, Caroline Orr, who married Augustus Bliss. The ceremony was performed very privately, and the next day Mrs. Bliss was established as mistress of a beautiful mansion in the city.

It is reported that the day after their marriage, Mr. Bliss said, 'This is a delectful day,' and that Mrs. Bliss replied, 'You mean delightful, Augustus. Never let me hear you say "delectful" again.'

CHAPTER XII.

YVONNE'S VISIT TO JOHN GREY.

AFTER obtaining the note from Deverel, Yvonne went to New York, not with any intention of leaving America, but she wished to go somewhere for a few days until she had clearly decided how to act. As soon as she reached New York she fell ill. The constant worry and excitement of the last few weeks had seriously injured her in mind and body. Her mind was haunted by many fears, that nearly deprived her of reason. She was afraid that she would die, and leave Deverel to the uninterrupted possession of her rival; or,

what in her opinion was yet worse, he might marry her rival before she could get well. Yvonne was tenderly and carefully nursed by her servant Bella, to whose unremitting attention her recovery was due.

As soon as Yvonne was able to travel, she resolved to visit John Grey previous to going to New Orleans.

On arriving at the village where John Grey resided, she stopped at the hotel where she had stayed before.

Her first step was to ascertain through Brutus that Deverel had left the place. The next morning she went to the office of John Grey, and found the old bachelor reading his paper.

‘Do you know of one man name Andrea Deverel?’ asked Yvonne, after learning that she was before Mr. Grey.

‘Yes, I am acquainted with a man known

by that name,' said the bachelor, laying down his paper, and looking at Yvonne with some astonishment.

'Can you tell to me how far I shall go to see him?' asked Yvonne.

'Yes. I believe that he is now in New Orleans.'

'Santo Marie! Nu Oleen!' exclaimed Yvonne as she reeled about in a way that made John Grey think she was only prevented from falling by his running to her assistance.

'Sit down, my good woman, and rest yourself,' said he, leading her to a seat.

'Tank you,' said Yvonne, sitting down and placing her brow in the palms of her hands. She remained in this manner for over a minute without speaking, and then arose and slowly walked towards the door.

'Stay,' said Mr. Grey, 'sit down again. I wish to speak with you.'

Yvonne complied, without seeming to know what she was doing.

‘You undoubtedly have some object in wishing to see Mr. Deverel,’ continued Mr. Grey. ‘I am his friend, and if you are another, I will assist you in any way that lies in my power. I don’t wish to be inquisitive, but if you could tell me your business, I may aid you in some way.’

‘I don’t want anything from you,’ said Yvonne, ‘but I tank you for being one good man. I want some of my money. A leetle of my money for to go to Italy.’

‘What is that? Has Deverel any of your money?’

‘Si, yes, but I don’t no more want to live wit him. He is one bad husband. One bad man. Oh! Jesus Mario, how much bad.’

‘Do you say that Deverel is your husband?’

‘Yes, mine bad husband.’

‘Can you prove that?’

‘No! oh! no! Poor Yvonne. She shall die.’

‘How has he treated you badly?’

Yvonne then began a long story, from which Mr. Grey learnt that she had been married to Deverel in Panama about two years before. While on the Isthmus Deverel was, according to her story, in league with two men who were robbers, and who made much money by robbing and stealing from those going to and from California. Deverel had wound up his business on the Isthmus by killing his two companions and absconding from her. She had followed him to New Orleans, thence to Niagara Falls, and thence to the village she was then in, where she met with him a few weeks before. He then promised if she would trouble him no more, to pay her passage to Italy, of which country she was a native,

and to see that she was paid two thousand dollars after embarking on the ship. She had gone, she said, to New York as he had directed her, and his promise, so far as paying the passage was concerned, had been fulfilled, but the two thousand dollars had not been paid, and she returned with the pilot who took the ship out of the harbour. She had now come to the village to seek her faithless husband.

When she had concluded, John Grey asked her for some proof of the truth of her story, and Yvonne produced the note that Deverel had written to her a few weeks before, offering her the two thousand dollars if she would leave the country. He read the note, observed the handwriting closely, and saw that it was genuine.

‘What made you come to me?’ he asked.
‘How did you know that I was acquainted with him?’

‘Yvonne explained that she had heard Deverel mention his name and address while on the Isthmus, and that he used to write letters to Mr. Grey and forward them to San Francisco by people going thither, in order to have them posted in that place, so that it should be thought that he was there. She had heard him laugh about deceiving Mr. Grey in that manner.

On hearing this the old bachelor was greatly excited. ‘My God!’ he exclaimed, ‘have I been thus deceived? Never, never will I believe a human being again.’ He did not think that by believing her he was giving the lie to his own words.

Yvonne further said that when she met Deverel on the Isthmus, she was returning from California, where she had been riding in a circus and had made about two thousand dollars, with which she was intending to return to Italy,

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her native country. Deverel had persuaded her to marry him, as she now believed for the purpose of getting her money.

John Grey then asked her in what ship she had embarked for Europe and the day on which it sailed. Yvonne told him that she was to go to Marseilles and thence to Italy; she gave the name of the ship, and the day it left New York.

The bachelor looked over a file of papers, and saw that the ship she named did sail on the day she stated.

Yvonne further said that Deverel left the Isthmus with about five thousand dollars, two thousand of which he had obtained from her. This part of her story seemed to John Grey much more probable than Deverel's story that he had made two hundred thousand dollars in California.

John Grey by this time was convinced that

he had been deceived. It was hard for him to believe this, but he no longer doubted the word of the woman before him. Her appearance indicated that she was an ill-treated sorrowful woman. Her manner of telling her story was sincere and impressive. He thought that a man of his years and experience could not be imposed upon by a woman. Poor man, he was self-deceived, for he knew nothing about the ways of artful women like Yvonne. He could see no reason for the woman wishing to deceive him, whilst Andrew Deverel had the strongest motives for trying to get rid of Yvonne.

The note she had shown him in Deverel's hand-writing was sufficient evidence of the truth of her story. Why should Deverel be so anxious for her to leave the country as to pay her passage and give her two thousand dollars, unless circumstances were as she had described?

Yvonne declared her intention of following him to New Orleans, but declined receiving any assistance from Mr. Grey, saying that she had sufficient to take her there.

The only business John Grey was able to transact that day was to write a letter to George Lorney.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN GREY'S LETTER.

LAURA was happy—happy in making preparations for the union with the only one she had ever loved.

Her unknown lover and correspondent was never the subject of her thoughts now. He was not even brought to her recollection by reading the letters of Andrew Deverel. The reader will think she must have been very blind, but the fact was that on her first acquaintance with Deverel, Laura had seen so much to remind her of her ideal, that after making up her mind that they were not identical, she

dismissed the one unseen lover from her thoughts.

As the time approached for the marriage of Laura, Mr. Lorney began to think more seriously of the change about to take place in his family.

Mr. Lorney did not distrust Deverel, but his anxiety concerning his daughter's future welfare increased as the time she was to remain under his protection diminished. This was but natural, for Deverel certainly was not a man that he had known for many years, nor had he actually seen him under circumstances which realised the good opinion he had formed of him.

Mr. Lorney thought that he had never been mistaken in his opinion of any person on a much slighter acquaintance than he had formed with Deverel at Niagara Falls, still

there was a possibility that he might be mistaken.

A letter from John Grey arrived one day, and Mr. Lorney was aroused from a deep reverie to receive it. He opened the letter and read as follows:—

‘FRIEND LORNEY,—I hope this letter will not arrive too late. If that fellow Deverel is with you, turn him out. I have reason to believe that he is a d—d scoundrel, and that I have been shamefully deceived in his character.

‘He has not the fortune he pretends to have, and the little he has was obtained by robbery. He has cruelly deceived and deserted a woman who believes herself his wife. I shall never forgive myself for having introduced him into your family. Do not allow

him to stay with you one minute after reading this. I would not write this without strong reasons.

‘Yours truly,

‘JOHN GREY.’

‘Thank God! it is not yet too late,’ said Mr. Lorney when he had read this letter. ‘Something has often been telling me lately that I had been too hasty, and have not used sufficient caution in promising my daughter to a person of whose previous history I knew nothing.’

Mr. Lorney sent for his daughter, and when she appeared, handed her the letter.

‘What is the meaning of this?’ said Laura, after she had read the letter.

‘It means,’ answered her father, ‘that you were very near becoming the prey of an

adventurer; but thank Heaven, my child, I have not lost you yet.'

'Do not judge of him too hastily, father,' said Laura, 'there may be some mistake.'

'I should like to believe so, my daughter, for I do not like to think I have been so deceived, but I fear there is no chance for a mistake. John Grey is a cautious man, and would not have written that letter without strong reasons for doing so, as he says. He is evidently as much disappointed in Deverel as I am, and strong evidence must have been produced to change his opinion.'

'But father, let us hear what he has got to say about it. Do not let us condemn him unheard. He may be able to make some explanation.'

'Yes, that is no more than fair, and I will

see him once more; but, Laura, you will probably never see him again.'

'Oh! father, do not tell me that. I am sure there is some mistake. I do not wish to live if he has done anything wrong, and I know—I am certain that he has not.'

'Of course you are; but fortunately, you still have a father who has you under his control, and I tell you again that you will probably never meet him again.'

Laura retired to her room, firm in the belief of the innocence of her lover.

Mr. Lorney was much afflicted with disappointment and shame.

That afternoon they received a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Bliss.

As they were regarded as members of the family, the letter was shown to them.

'That is just as I supposed,' said Bliss, after

reading the letter. ‘Anyone could see Deverel was not a gentleman by the way his cravat was teed.’

‘You mean *tied*, Augustus,’ said Mrs. Bliss, ‘never let me hear you say *teed* again. Now, having given you a lesson how to talk, I’ll give you another how to think. Mr. Deverel in his dress and deportment was a gentleman. I do not pretend to know anything about Deverel’s moral character, but there is certainly one thing to be said in his favour—he is not a fop.’

‘Thank you, Caroline,’ said Laura. ‘I was afraid that no one would say a word to his credit again. I am sure there must be some cruel mistake.’

‘I think so too,’ said Mrs. Bliss.

‘He has more of the appearance of a seelor than a gentleman,’ said Mr. Bliss, ‘and I

cannot see what there is about that to admeer.'

'Augustus,' said Mrs. Bliss, 'henceforth will you please to say *sailor* and *admire*, not *seelor* and *admeer*; and furthermore, under present circumstances, you should not try to make Laura think more of Deverel than she already does.'

CHAPTER XIV.

YVONNE'S VISIT TO MR. LORNEY.

WHEN Yvonne reached New Orleans she sent Brutus to acquaint Hannibal of her arrival.

The latter gentleman had been long waiting impatiently to see Bella, and hastened to meet her.

Yvonne allowed him to wait for more than an hour before she sent for him to her presence ; but Hannibal had no cause to complain, for while he was waiting, Bella was allowed to entertain him.

The business that Yvonne wished to transact

with Hannibal was to arrange an opportunity of seeing his master.

‘That will be a little difficult,’ said Hannibal, ‘for my master, I mean Mr. Bliss, is very particular; and a stranger has much difficulty in getting to say anything to him; although since his marriage he is getting to think and talk more like other people every day.’

‘You did say to me one time that the Miss Lorney was his cousin. I wish for to much see him for her—her and Andrea Deverel. He is one bad man, and has one wife. I shall no let him have one more.’

‘Ah! indeed!’ exclaimed Hannibal, ‘I promise that you shall see my master, I mean Mr. Bliss, immediately.’

Hannibal departed, and in less than an hour returned with Augustus Bliss.

‘I am told that you accuse Mr. Deverel of being already married,’ said Mr. Bliss.

‘Yes; but there is noting wrong in that.’

‘No, not necessarily, I hope,’ said Bliss; ‘but why do you wish to see me?’

‘To tell to you that Andrea Deverel is one bad man, and that the cousin belonging to you must no marry wit him.’

‘But why should his acts concern you?’

‘I am his poor wife, Yvonne!’

‘Can you give any proof of that?’

‘Yes, one leetle.’

‘And will you go with me to see Mr. Lorney?’

‘Yes, any time you sall want me.’

‘Come with me now,’ said Augustus, ‘my carriage is at the door.’

Yvonne left the room, and instantly returned wearing a bonnet and shawl of the latest fashion.

‘Pon my honor,’ said Mr. Bliss, ‘I believe

you are an honest truth-telling woman. You have not kept me weeting one minute.'

They entered the carriage, and in half an hour arrived at the residence of Mr. George Lorney.

They were shown into a parlor, and Mr. Lorney immediately after made his appearance.

'Mr. Lorney,' said Augustus, 'allow me to present to you Mrs. Andrew Deverel.'

'Mrs. Deverel!' exclaimed Mr. Lorney, in astonishment.

'Yes, the wife of Mr. Deverel, a particular acquaintance of your daughter.'

'Are you sure,' said Mr. Lorney to Yvonne, 'that your husband is the Mr. Deverel with whom we are acquainted?'

'My husband is one friend of one Mr. John Grey,' answered Yvonne.

'That is sufficient proof,' said Mr. Lorney.

‘We mean but one man. Can you give us any proof that you are the wife of Mr. Deverel?’

Yvonne shook her head.

‘Then we are required to take your word for it, unsupported by evidence?’ said Mr. Lorney.

‘Yes,’ answered Yvonne, ‘why for not? but I can give you one leetle proof. One few weeks gone by he much wish me to go home to Italy. He wish me so much to go, he give me two thousand dollar to go, and noting to stay.’

‘If we knew this was true,’ said Mr. Lorney, ‘it would as you say be a little proof that the rest of your story is true.’

Yvonne then produced the note written by Deverel.

Mr. Lorney read this note and said, ‘I will doubt your word no more. This to me confirms the truth of all you have said.’

Thus was Deverel's generosity converted into a proof of his guilt.

'But this is no the all of his badness,' said Yvonne. 'He tried to get me away witout paying to me the money, aldo it was all my money dat he rob from me in Panama.'

She then told them the same story about her connection with Deverel that she had told to John Grey.

She declined any assistance from Mr. Lorney, and declared that the trouble she was taking was only from the desire to prevent Deverel from making another victim.

Mr. Lorney expressed his pity for her unfortunate situation, and his thanks for what she had done; and she was conducted by Bliss to the hotel from whence she came.

Mr. Lorney looked with horror upon the narrow escape of himself and his daughter from misery.

Laura was told of the particulars Yvonne had related, and of the note Deverel had written offering her money to leave the country.

‘Father,’ said Laura, ‘do you believe this is possible?’

‘I have not the least doubt but what the woman told me the truth.’

‘It may be true, father, but I—I cannot help it; I love him and ever shall.’

‘Silence! Laura!’ exclaimed Mr. Lorney, in a more angry tone than he had ever used towards her before. ‘Never let me hear you speak in that way again.’ Then, as though ashamed of his anger, he added, ‘My poor girl, I pity you. Try and forget him, and live happy with a father who will ever protect you from harm. Never let the name of the one who has tried to injure you be mentioned in the house after this day. It is not

necessary for us to believe that he was a robber and murderer on the Isthmus of Panama. It is enough for us to know that he has a wife, or that there is a woman whom he has cruelly deceived, and that he has tried to get her out of the country in order to obtain you. Of this I now have not the slightest doubt. Never speak to me of him again.'

Laura retired to her room, and then came over her mind the memory of the mysterious conversation she had heard between Deverel and the young man he had met at the Falls of Niagara : a conversation from which she learnt that Deverel had been in an expedition in which men were killed. She remembered his unwillingness to converse on the subject ; his anxiety to conceal information on it, and the abrupt manner he had parted from his acquaintance. The recollection of this excited a doubt ; but still she loved.

CHAPTER XV.

‘NOT AT HOME.’

To-day most happy,
And e'er to-morrow's sun has set, most abject.
How scant the space between these vast extremes.

BLAIR'S GRAVE.

ANDREW DEVEREL was happy when he again landed in New Orleans. Within an hour he hoped to be in Laura's presence.

The day in which they were to be united was but a few hours in the future—that future to him seemed bright and joyous, and not one cloud overshadowed it.

After engaging rooms in the St. Charles, he took a conveyance and was driven to the residence of Mr. Lorney. The servant who answered his knock held the 'door a-jar,' placed himself firmly in the way, and said, 'Mr. Deverel is not to be admitted.'

'Is Mr. Lorney at home?' asked Deverel.

'Yas Sa,' answered the black, 'but he don't want to see you.'

'You d—d scoundrel! out of my way,' exclaimed Deverel, making a demonstration towards entering the house.

The black stepped back, closed the door, and shoved a bolt, leaving Deverel on the outside of the house. Astonished and bewildered at his reception, Deverel returned to town.

On reaching his rooms, he wrote a note to Mr. Lorney, stating the manner he had been

received on calling that afternoon, and demanding an explanation.

This note he despatched by a servant, and told him to wait for an answer.

The servant returned with the note unopened. On the envelope were the words: 'You are exposed. We know all. Do not add to your offences by annoying me more. G. L.'

Andrew Deverel was wild with rage. 'Who had done this? and what could be the meaning?'

The evening was too far advanced for him to take any further proceedings, and he passed the night without sleep.

Suddenly the idea occurred to him that Yvonne had some way injured him in the opinion of his former friends.

She had not called on his agent in New York. She might still be in the country, and

during his absence have been working to prevent him from marrying another. There was a gleam of hope in this.

He thought he had discovered the cause of the exposure Mr. Lorney had mentioned on the note.

He had only to gain an opportunity of making an explanation, and all would be well.

In the morning he enquired for Mr. Bliss, and went to him as soon as it was likely he would be up.

On enquiring if Mr. Bliss was at home, the servant said he would enquire, and asked his name. Deverel wrote his name on a piece of paper, with which the servant left the hall, and in a minute after returned, saying, 'Mr. Bliss is not at home to you. You are requested to leave the house and to take this piece of paper with you.'

It was the paper on which he had written

his name. Deverel took the paper and did as he was requested. He returned to his rooms and wrote a letter to John Grey.

Before his departure for the West Indies, and whilst living with the family of Mr. Lorney, Deverel had met at the house of his host a lawyer, living in the city, named Legall. To this lawyer he went and told him all.

‘Well,’ said the lawyer when Deverel had concluded his story, ‘I suppose you want my assistance.’

‘Yes, it is for that purpose I am come.’

‘I am willing to believe your story,’ said the lawyer, ‘until a better one is told. In what way can I aid you?’

‘By ascertaining from Mr. Lorney of what I am accused, and who are my accusers, and by procuring me an opportunity to explain or refute anything alleged against me. I do not wish to be condemned unheard.’

'I can see nothing unreasonable in what you require,' said the lawyer, 'and I will go to Mr. Lorney immediately. You may call on me at three o'clock this afternoon.'

Precisely at three o'clock Deverel again came to the lawyer's office. Mr. Legall had just returned.

'What success?' asked the impatient Deverel as he entered the office.

'None at all,' said the lawyer, 'and I have nearly converted a friend into an enemy.'

'Tell me all about it,' said Deverel, now for the first time beginning to think his difficulty serious.

'Mr. Lorney seemed pleased to see me, as he generally is. We chatted for about a quarter of an hour on the topics of the time. I then enquired about you. I believe I asked if you had returned. "Stop," said Mr. Lorney, "never mention that name in this house, or in

my presence again." I expressed some surprise, and he added, "the man of whom you speak is a scoundrel. I am fortunate in having discovered it 'ere too late. We will let the subject drop."

'I replied by asking if it were fair to condemn a man unheard.

' "Certainly not," said he, "as a general rule, but to all rules there are exceptions, and this affair is one of them. I do not think a satisfactory explanation of his conduct possible. He is not condemned altogether unheard, for I have had the evidence of his own handwriting of the truth of part of what he is accused. Pray say no more about him."

' But Mr. Lorney,' said I, ——

' "If you will continue this conversation," said he, "I must leave the room," and seeing that I could do nothing with him, I left the room myself, and came home.'

Deverel then wrote a note to Augustus Bliss, asking him as an honourable man to grant him an interview for the purpose of telling him of what he was accused, and giving him a chance to vindicate his character.

This note was not answered by Bliss, but by some other person, who stated that 'Mr. Bliss was not anxious to know anything more, either good or bad, of the character of Deverel, and therefore declines having anything to say to him.'

While waiting for an answer to his letter to John Grey, Deverel strove to get a sight of Laura. He could never see her walking in the lawn, nor in any way see or hear that such a person as Laura Lorney was in existence.

He was anxious to know if Laura shared her father's prepossession against him.

One day he saw Augustus Bliss entering a billiard room, and followed him. Walking up

to Mr. Bliss, Deverel accosted him, by saying, 'Mr. Bliss, we were once on speaking terms. If we are not now, you alone know the reason, and from you I demand it.'

'Because I have discovered that you are a scoundrel,' said Bliss, speaking more like a man than he was ever known to do before. Deverel's brow instantly became red and his cheeks white. His hands firmly closed convulsively, and there was a choking sensation in his throat. With a violent struggle between reason and rage, he controlled for an instant his passion, and said in a voice low, and tremulous, 'Do not make assertions like that, but tell me of what I am accused. What crime have I committed?'

Augustus Bliss threw back his head, and turned on his heel, as though the person before him was unworthy of further notice.

Deverel sprang forward and struck him.

Bliss retreated two or three paces and drew a knife. The two then had a scuffle, and before the bystanders could separate them, Deverel was wounded in two places, and Bliss was thrown to the floor with a broken arm.

Bliss was amongst acquaintances who knew him to be what in New Orleans passes for a gentleman. Deverel was amongst strangers, and having struck a man with his hand, was turned into the street as a blackguard.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CORONER'S INQUEST.

FOR a week Andrew Deverel was confined to his room. During that week the expected letter arrived from John Grey.

It was comprised in three lines; the writer declined any further correspondence or acquaintance with Andrew Deverel.

Some authors would give two or three pages to describe the state of mind in which the incidents of the last few days had brought the hero of this story. I do not choose to do so; but the reader has liberty to imagine as much anguish and despair as is possible for one

individual with a large strong mind to bear. The sudden transition from perfect happiness to the wildest despair so bewildered his mind that he hardly knew how to act to regain his good name, or learn of what he was at once accused and condemned.

While waiting with his mind confused by a hundred thoughts concerning what he should do next, he was told by a young coloured man that a lady living in the third municipality wished to see him. The black gave him the number and street, and said that was all he was allowed to communicate.

Deverel followed the directions given him, and found Yvonne.

She had learnt from Hannibal the success of her scheme, and something of the trouble and despair which it had caused Deverel.

Unfortunate Yvonne! She was in care and affliction even greater than he whom she had

so greatly injured. She had squandered her money in travelling. Her jewels were sold and the proceeds were gone. The only means of supporting herself longer was by selling her servants, and that she had determined not to do. But want of money troubled her little. The excitement of the last few weeks had on some points upset or deranged her intellect. She had learnt to believe herself to be a despised and greatly-injured woman. She was certain that Andrew Deverel could never be hers, and that thought was agony to Yvonne.

The question that haunted her was, 'why should I live longer?' and by her clouded and excited intellect no sufficient reason could be given. She resolved to see Andrew Deverel once more, and then to do what she had lately often threatened — die. She was two days making preparations for the consummation of

this resolve; and for some of those preparations she sought the aid of a lawyer.

On the day set for the final settlement of her earthly affairs she gave Bella permission to go into the country for the day to visit a sister who was a servant on a plantation. Bella had not seen this sister for more than a year, and started joyfully on her way. It was Brutus who delivered the message to Deverel which brought him to Yvonne, and after that, he too received permission to pass the day wherever he pleased.

‘Yvonne!’ exclaimed Deverel, on finding himself in her presence, ‘it is you who have thrown me from the heaven of hope and happiness to my present hell of misery and despair. Why? and how have you done it?’

‘Yes, Andrea, it was I,’ said Yvonne. ‘You want to know why? I will tell to you. You shall feel as I do.’ If I love much for

noting, so shall you. You are mine. You are mine, and no otro womans shall say dat so long as I live. You want much to know how? I tell to you—I tell to all you are mine husband.'

'Wretch!' exclaimed Deverel, 'undo the mischief you have done. Go before those with whom you have been injuring me, and acknowledge yourself a liar. Go willingly, or I will drag you before them by the hair and make you eat your own words.'

'No! never!' shrieked Yvonne. 'Take you me dare, and I will again tell to all you are my husband.'

Yvonne then broke into loud screams of wild maniacal laughter; and Deverel, nearly as frantic as herself, rushed from the house.

'Is it possible,' thought he as he walked hurriedly away, 'that my hopes and happiness on earth are to be blighted by the story of a lunatic?'

The next morning he went to visit his lawyer. His object was to get Mr. Legall to aid him in convincing Mr. Lorney that he had been deceived by the story of a mad woman. Several plans were proposed and discussed, all of which the lawyer pronounced unworthy of a trial.

‘If the woman is mad,’ said he, ‘Mr. Lorney will say “her madness has some cause,” which he will probably attribute to your conduct; and the magnitude of your crimes, as seen by him, will only be increased.’

‘The result of his evil opinion of me can be no worse than at present,’ said Deverel; ‘let us try something.’

The plan upon which they decided on was to persuade Mr. Lorney to visit Yvonne, representing to him that the woman who had done him so much service was in great distress and much in need of assistance.

On reaching his hotel, Deverel was arrested on the charge of murdering a woman the day before in the third municipality. He was taken to the house where he had seen Yvonne the day before.

A coroner's jury was then being assembled.

Before the close of the investigation, Deverel was brought in to hear the evidence against him.

A woman living in the basement of the house where the supposed murder had been committed, was sworn ; and while this ceremony was being performed, Mr. Legall, accompanied by Mr. Lorney, entered the room.

The woman deposed that about two o'clock in the afternoon of the previous day she saw a man enter the apartments occupied by the deceased. She was then asked if she saw that man present. She replied in the affirmative, and pointed out Andrew Deverel. After the

prisoner had entered the apartments of the deceased, she heard loud talk in a masculine voice; but could not distinguish the words. The tone of voice appeared to her to be that of a person in anger. She afterwards heard the deceased either laughing or screaming; but was not certain at the time which. She now believed that the sounds she heard were screams. Immediately after she saw the prisoner leave the house in great haste, and apparently in a state of great excitement. After that she heard nothing more.

In the evening a servant of the deceased, named Bella, came home, and soon after ran downstairs saying that her mistress was dead. She went up and saw the woman was dead and quite cold.

Bella had told her that she found the door of the room in which her mistress was lying

locked. The key was in the lock on the outside of the door.

Another woman living with the last witness corroborated her testimony in every particular.

Two physicians testified that in their opinion the deceased died of the effects of poison. They thought, from the appearance of the deceased, that poison had been administered by force.

A chemist testified that he had analyzed the contents of the stomach of the deceased, and found strychnine in sufficient quantity to cause death.

Andrew Deverel was removed to the city gaol; and Bella was taken to another place of confinement, until some decision had been made as to who was entitled to claim her.

Brutus, the other servant of the deceased, had not been seen since twelve o'clock the day

before ; and the police were instructed to find him.

Mr. Lorney returned home more horror-struck than before, to think that he had once given his consent for Deverel to marry his daughter. His belief in his own ability to judge of human nature by appearances was gone. He had stronger reasons for believing Deverel guilty than any other person who heard the examination that day. He could see a reason why Deverel should wish the death of Yvonne, and others who had been present could not. He had told his daughter that Deverel should never be mentioned by either of them again ; but he knew that she still thought him innocent of any wrong, and for her happiness he determined to tell her the terrible truth.

On entering the house he sent for Laura.

‘My daughter,’ said he, when Laura entered his library, ‘I have sent for you to speak once more of one who I believe yet occupies your thoughts too much. You cannot but understand who I mean. Last week he assaulted your cousin in a ruffianlike manner, for no other reason than that Augustus would not aid him in prosecuting evil and selfish designs against you. To-day I saw him committed for trial for the murder of his wife—the woman who was here to expose his baseness.’

Mr. Lorney then gave her the particulars of the evidence against Deverel, and stated as there was an undoubted cause why the prisoner should wish the unfortunate woman removed out of the way, there could be but little doubt of his guilt, and the evidence against him was strong.

When Mr. Lorney concluded, Laura left

the room, not having said one word during the interview.

‘He cannot be guilty,’ said she to herself on reaching her own apartment. ‘He could not do it; and may God forgive me! I believe I must love him if he did.’

CHAPTER XVII.

HANNIBAL AND BRUTUS AGAIN MEET.

ABOUT ten o'clock in the evening of the day that Yvonne died, Brutus made his appearance, at the back entrance of the house occupied by Augustus Bliss.

The lower part of his face was smothered in a handkerchief, and his hat was pulled down over his eyes.

Of the black boy that answered his knock, he asked, 'Is Mr. Hannibal Gordanier at home?'

'Yas, I tink he is,' answered the boy. 'Who shall I tell him hab de honor ob seein him?'

Hannibal and Brutus again meet. 153

‘Neber mine de name,’ said Brutus, ‘but tell him a genelum wants to see him at de doah.’

The boy disappeared, and soon after Hannibal made his appearance.

‘Good evenin, Mr. Gordanier,’ said Brutus.

‘Ah! and you too, Brutus,’ said Hannibal, ‘what’s up to-night?’

‘Whish! don’t speak my name. I am keepin’ dark.’

‘You would keep much darker,’ said Hannibal, ‘if you would lift your hat and take off that handkerchief.’

‘Now dats an onkind remock to make to a fren. Caus you am a leetle whitah dan me, you make sinevations ’bout my cullah. I’m ’stonished at you, Hannibal, a genelum dats had so much roligus distruction.’

‘Never mind, my boy. You know that I mean no harm. What is it you want?’

‘I want to hab a leetle confab with you. You see missus am dead.’

‘What! Your mistress dead?’

‘Yas, she hab died. Dats sure nuff. I went home dis affernoon and foun her in a fit. She war onsensibal, and war biting her own mouf orful, but I didnt stan half a minute afore she war quite gone. I got frighten and tinks I’d betta make myself scase. Some papahs war laying on de table, and I tinks dem mought be what dey call de bull of sale for me and Belly, and I fotchted ’em away and hare dey ah. Now you see as long as we hab got dese hare papahs nobody can own us. We bullongs to nobody.’

‘But where is Bella?’ asked Hannibal, who had been listening very impatiently.

‘She went out in de country dis mornin to visit her sistah. I speck she hab got back fore dis. Golly! I wondah what she’ll tink ob it?’

‘I must go and see,’ said Hannibal.

‘No ! don’t you be gwine dar at dis time ob night, or some one will be ’quirun for me. You take dese hare papahs. You ah a man ob lunnen. See what dey ah, and keep um save, and say nuffen to nobody ’bout me.’

‘Where are you going to live?’ asked Hannibal.

‘I hab got a perdition in de cookin daparmunt ob a big hotal whar I shall see nobody but culled people. It am a disgussen low perdition for a man like me to take.’

‘Of course ; but, Brutus, I have some doubts about taking these papers, for I believe there is such a crime as receiving stolen property.’

‘Yas, ob course, but don’t you know dat stolum probertu mus bullong to somebody. Missus am dead, and dese hare papahs bullongs to whoeber happens to hab um, and dats you and I. Ef unybudy else guts hold ob dese hare

papahs, Belly will sartin be sold, and go whar you will neber see her again.'

This argument decided Hannibal's doubts, and he promised to keep the papers safe, should he find that they in any way concerned Brutus and Bella.

Brutus then told him where he was going to live, but invited him not to call often, for fear of making a track which others might follow, and he should be found.

Hannibal had no desire to visit cooks in the kitchens of hotels, and readily promised what Brutus required.

They then shook hands, and Brutus again pulled down his hat, buried his face in the handkerchief, and departed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A FREE PRISONER.

WHEN Hannibal examined the papers left by Brutus, he found that one of them was what the lawyers term an 'instrument,' legally drawn, conferring upon Bella the boon of freedom. There was a note to this paper stating that Bella had been made free by her mistress Yvonne Barri, in consideration of the affection and kindness Bella had exhibited when her mistress was ill in New York. Another paper made Brutus 'lord of himself, that heritage of woe!' and the reason given for making him free was, that his mistress did

not wish to cheat anyone by selling him, for he was worth nothing. There was a third paper, which was written in a language Hannibal could not read; he supposed it to have been written by the woman before her death.

Bella and Brutus were free. With them Hannibal was most interested, and therefore the contents of the third paper he cared but little about, but put it safely away, intending to show it some time to his master.

Hannibal had to attend on Mr. Bliss, and had no opportunity of going to see Bella till the afternoon of the day of the inquest. He then arrived too late to see her, but learnt where she was to be kept, and heard the police ordered to find Brutus. Three days after the inquest, by taking a few written lines from his master, he was allowed to see Bella, who in sorrow for the loss of her mistress, and uncertain of her own fate, was in a most dejected state.

Bella blamed herself to Hannibal for having left her mistress on the day she died.

‘I shall never forgive myself,’ said she, ‘for having left her. I knew it was not safe, but I did so want to see sister Polly. I had good reason to know what would happen.’

‘Why? What made you think that Mr. Deverel would poison his wife?’ said Hannibal.

‘What ails you, Hannibal? Have you, too, gone mad?’

‘No; I hope not. What makes you think so?’

‘To hear you talk about my mistress being Mr. Deverel’s wife.’

‘She told me so, and told my master, I mean Mr. Bliss, she was.’

‘I never heard her say she was, but I have heard her say that she would be. Mr. Deverel did not poison her. She poisoned herself. I

have often heard her talk about doing it. She has not always been in her senses for more than ten days, and I believe she sent me and Brutus out of the way so that she could die without our trying to stop her.'

'Well, that's strange. Master thinks that Deverel killed her, and says he hopes that he will be hanged.'

'Your master don't know anything about it. She poisoned herself.'

'What do you suppose she did that for?'

'Don't I tell you that she was out of her senses, and had been talking about killing herself several days. What do I suppose she wanted to do it for? Why, because she wanted to die, of course.'

'To be sure,' said Hannibal, 'I didn't think of that. Did she ever say anything about making you free?'

'Yes, she often told me that when she died,

which would be soon, I should be free, but I never thought much about it, knowing how mad she was.'

She kept her word. 'This paper,' said Hannibal, taking one from his coat pocket, 'makes you free.'

At this proof of affection from her departed mistress, Bella cried bitterly. Hannibal promised to use his influence with his master to get Bella liberated from her confinement, and at her request retained her 'free paper,' to keep it safe.

That night Hannibal went to see Brutus, and found him far back and far down in the kitchen of the public-house where Brutus said he should live. It was a region that had not been invaded by a white man for years, and in it Brutus was safe from pursuit, even had the landlord of the house wished to find him.

'Now dis is bery kind ob you, Hannibul,'

said Brutus, 'to come and see an ole fren in distras, and in sich a perdition as dis. What is thar new?'

'Do you remember the man you called the "debil"?''

'Yas.'

'He is in jail for killing your mistress.'

'Wall, I declar, now dat's queer. What made um spose he killed har?'

'Because he went to see her the day she died. He was seen to go into the house and come out of it.'

Brutus then looked cautiously around in all directions, and in doing so exhibited the white of his eyes in an alarming manner. Then, coming close to Hannibal, he whispered, — 'Don't you know I did dat ah same ting?'

'Yes, so you told me before.'

'Wall, why dident um spose twar me?'

‘I suppose you was not seen, but the police are looking for you.’

‘Golly! I was gwine to say I wish um luck, but I don’t. I must keep bery dark.’

‘Then you must take some of that grease off your face, for it now shines tremendously.’

‘Hannibul, dis am no jokin mattar.’

‘I know it, but I have got some more news for you. One of the papers you gave me is of great importance to you.’

‘I reckoned so, and dat’s why I fatched um. What do it do?’

‘It makes you a free man. Your mistress, before she died, gave you freedom, and here is the “free paper” to prove it,’ said Hannibal, giving him the paper.

‘Golly! How queer I feel!’ said Brutus, snatching the paper. ‘I’ve a big mind to holler and make a noise. I’m free!’

Brutus then put on his hat and said, 'Come on, my fren, les go out ob dis.'

'What do you mean?' asked Hannibal.

'I'm gwine to leabe dis cantumptabul perdition—I'm free.'

'You will not be long, if you go out. The police will collar you.'

'I don't car. I'm free. Come on.'

Hannibal followed him out into the street, and Brutus, to have a little more of his society, proposed going with him part of the way on his road home.

'What do you reckon de caus why missus gub me free?' asked Brutus.

'It states in the paper, that the reason she gave you freedom was, that she did not wish to cheat anyone by selling you, as you was worth nothing.'

'Yah, yah, yah. Dat's a fac,' said Brutus,

laughing, 'I'se woth nuffen, and no real genelum am. I'm free.'

'Here, my boy, I want you,' said a man, touching Brutus on the shoulder.

'Whau for?' asked Brutus. 'What hab I done?'

'That's what I want to know,' said the man; 'come along with me, and we will find out sometime.'

And he took Brutus by the collar and moved on.

'Good night, Hannibal,' said Brutus, 'I don't car, I'm free.'

'No, I'll be d——d if you are,' said the man, taking a firmer grasp of the collar with one hand, and of his baton with the other.

CHAPTER XIX.

YVONNE'S CONFESSION.

As the day approached for the trial of Andrew Deverel, other facts came to light that involved the death of Yvonne in some mystery. Mr. Legall, who believed in the innocence of Deverel, and who interested himself much in the affair of Yvonne's death, found a man who, about the time the murder was supposed to have been committed, saw Brutus, the servant of the murdered woman, enter her apartments through the window from the verandah. Knowing that the servant belonged to the place, he had taken no further notice of the affair, and

had started the same afternoon on business to Mobile. On his return he heard of the murder, and then made known what he had seen. This, coupled with the fact that Brutus had kept from the scene of the murder, and had been found with some difficulty, created a strong suspicion against him.

Mr. Bliss, at the instigation of Hannibal, procured the release of Bella, and Mrs. Bliss procured for her a situation as sempstress. The difference of social position between Bella and himself was now a source of much trouble to Hannibal. Bella was free, and he was a slave. This distinction to him seemed a barrier that would separate them for ever. So much did this trouble Hannibal, that he felt some regret that she was free, although Bella, after obtaining her freedom, seemed to regard him with as much affection as ever.

One day, as Mr. Bliss seemed to want some-

thing to do, Hannibal gave him the paper he could not read, which Brutus had brought from Yvonne's room on the day of her death.

Augustus Bliss had some knowledge of Italian, and saw directly that the paper was written in that language.

After spelling over a few words, he sat down seriously to translate it. By the help of a dictionary, he succeeded in making an intelligible translation.

By the time this was done, he had become convinced that Deverel was an innocent man.

After Deverel had left Yvonne, she set about preparing herself for another world.

It seemed as if this business had somewhat calmed her excited feelings, and at length she felt regret for the injury she had done Deverel, but this regret did not shake her determination to die. Yvonne, like most females, was afraid of another world: this fear was blind to the

crime of self-murder, but caused some repentance for the crime committed against the one she loved.

She wrote a confession, stating that the accusations she had made against Deverel were all false, and gave some silly reasons why those accusations were made.

To carry out her resolution of dying, she declared that she was about to take strychnine, which she held in one hand, whilst writing this confession, and she also stated where the poison was bought, and the day of the month that it was procured. This paper bore the signature of Yvonne Barri, and was placed with the 'free papers' for Bella and Brutus on a table, where it would be found after she was dead.

After completing his translation of Yvonne's confession, Mr. Bliss sent for Hannibal, and bade him state all he knew about the paper. The only information Hannibal could give

was that he had received the paper with two others from Brutus, who said that he had taken them from the room in which his mistress died.

‘Do you know where Brutus is?’ asked Mr. Bliss.

‘Yes, he is in the jail,’ answered Hannibal.

‘All right. That will do, Hannibal,’ said his master. ‘Tell the boys to bring out a horse and buggy.’

With the paper and his translation of it Mr. Bliss drove to the residence of Mr. Legall.

‘Excuse me for troubling you when out of your office,’ said Mr. Bliss on meeting the lawyer, ‘but having learnt that I have wronged Mr. Deverel, I am anxious to make some reparation as soon as possible.’

‘If what you have to communicate will be of any benefit to Deverel,’ said Mr. Legall, ‘I shall not be troubled, but much pleased.’

‘I have with me positive proof of his innocence—proof that Yvonne Barri poisoned herself. Here is the original confession, written by the woman, and my translation of it.’

After reading the translation and examining the original, the lawyer asked Bliss how he came by it.

‘I regret that it has come through so many hands,’ said the lawyer. ‘We shall have to show that this paper was written by Yvonne Barri, and that may be difficult to do. Were there any other papers brought away with this one?’

‘Yes, two papers, giving freedom to her servants.’

‘I must see those papers,’ said the lawyer. ‘Do you know where they are?’

‘Yes. I can get one of them—the one belonging to the girl Bella. Brutus, the other servant, who is in jail, has the other.’

‘Get the paper from the girl, and I will call at ten o’clock in the morning at your house to see it. I shall be passing by there, on the way to the jail, to have a talk with the boy Brutus. Since he is not guilty he may tell the truth, and clear up some points on which there is yet a mystery.’

Mr. Bliss promised to have the paper, and went home.

The next morning Mr. Legall called at his house and examined Bella’s ‘free paper.’ ‘The evidence is all clear now,’ said he. ‘I know the lawyer who drew up this. He will prove that the signature of Yvonne Barri to it is genuine, and it is the same as the signature to the confession you have translated. Anyone can see that both were written by the same hand.’

Mr. Legall then drove to the jail to see Brutus.

‘Brutus, my boy,’ said the lawyer, speaking

in a familiar tone, 'I am a lawyer, and I do n't want to see either you or Mr. Deverel punished for a crime that neither of you have committed. I believe that your mistress poisoned herself, and I want to prove that in the court, but shall not be able to do so, unless I know the whole truth.'

'Am you gwine to clare me too?' asked Brutus, in a tone of surprise.

'Yes. In order to clear Deverel I must prove that she poisoned herself; and, if I do that, it is proof that you did not do it.'

'Sartin! ob course! but how is you gwine to prob dat?'

'One of the papers you brought from your mistress's room after she died was written by her, and she wrote that she was going to kill herself by taking poison.'

'I fotch papahs out ob har room after she war dead? Why, massa, I warn't thar at all.'

‘Then I am afraid you will have to swing. Mr. Bliss showed me a paper in which your mistress confessed that she was going to take poison. Unless it was brought out of her room, she did not write it, and therefore it will clear no one. Some one will have to swing, and I expect it will be you.’

‘Yas. I complehen yer now,’ said Brutus. ‘Ef de papah war fotched from missus’ room, den she wrote it, and I am clare. Ef it war not fotched from thar, she didn’t wrote it, and nobody is clare.’

‘Yes,’ said the lawyer; ‘that is a plain statement of the matter.’

‘Whar did Mr. Bliss get de papah?’

‘Of Hannibal, his servant, who got it from you.’

Brutus now saw that it was for his interest to tell the truth, and that nothing could be

gained by denying it, since Hannibal had betrayed him.

‘ Wall, spose I fotched the papahs from thar, what den ? ’

‘ You will soon be at liberty. There is nothing very serious in your offence. ’

‘ Wall, I did take um. Now you hab it. ’

‘ That confession is one step towards your obtaining liberty. Now I wish to know what made you enter the room by the window ? ’

With some trouble Mr. Legall learnt from Brutus that he found the door locked, but looked in at the window from the verandah, because he heard some one moaning. He saw his mistress in what he called a fit, and entered the window with the intention of aiding her in some way, but she died immediately. He was too much frightened to alarm the people of the house, and thought he would steal away

unperceived. Seeing the papers on the table, he brought them away. The door was locked on the inside, and the key was in the lock. He went out by the door of the room, and locked it, leaving the key in the door. Brutus could give no reason for having locked the door, but how the door became locked from the outside was one point Mr. Legall wished explained, to establish the fact that the woman had poisoned herself.

After leaving Brutus, the lawyer visited Deverel, whom he found in a state of indifference as to his fate.

On learning that Yvonne was dead, Deverel thought that she had poisoned herself, but at the inquest he had been confounded at the substantial nature of the evidence against him, and saw no hope of being able to prove himself innocent.

‘Cheer up, my friend,’ said the lawyer; ‘you must not wear such a dejected look, or people will think that you are guilty.’

‘The evidence against me is so strong,’ answered Deverel, ‘that I am sometimes inclined to think that I am guilty.’

‘Would you not like to hear some proof of your innocence?’

‘Yes, I would indeed, if only to satisfy my own doubts and conscience.’

‘Well, you shall hear it,’ said Mr. Legall, and he took from his pocket the translation of the paper left by Yvonne, and read it.

He then explained to Deverel the whole chain of evidence that would clear him.

When he left, Deverel’s heart was lightened by hope.

Mr. Legall next proceeded to the chemist’s, where Yvonne had stated that she procured the poison, and there stated his business.

On the day that Yvonne had stated she had bought the poison, the sale of strychnine to Yvonne Barri was recorded in the books of the establishment.

Mr. Legall was then prepared for the trial of his client.

CHAPTER XX.

DEVEREL IS ACQUITTED.

THE day after Deverel received the visit from Mr. Legall, he was visited by Augustus Bliss.

‘Mr. Deverel,’ said Bliss, ‘I have deeply wronged and insulted you, but I hope that you will give me credit for not doing so without thinking that I had a cause.’

‘I am now convinced that I have been deceived by others, and been led to form a wrong opinion of your actions, and I have come to confess my error. I was led to believe that you were unworthy of the acquaintance of an honest man. The evidence that

led to that belief has proved false, and I regret that I was so deceived as to offend you in the manner I did. I do not ask for friendship, but I do not want an enemy in a man whom I have wronged. Will you forgive me?’

‘I cannot bear animosity,’ answered Deverel, ‘against one who makes so frank an apology. I do not suppose you treated me as you did without believing you had some reason, and, had I been what you were probably led to believe, I should have been worthy of the contempt of all. I blame you the most for not giving me an opportunity of making an explanation, but for this also your frank apology amply atones.’

‘This affair shall be a lesson that will keep me from acting in the same manner again,’ said Bliss, ‘and I shall try to make you what reparation I can.’

‘Thank you,’ said Deverel. ‘To regain

the good opinion of my former friends is what I most anxiously desire. When they are convinced that I have not deceived them, my other difficulties will trouble me but little.'

Mr. Bliss then shook hands with Deverel and left him. His manly apology raised him much in the opinion of Deverel.

Augustus Bliss had made an apology, and one from Mr. Lorney, he had no doubt, would soon follow, and the hope of being united to Laura again began to shine in his soul.

Augustus Bliss became acquainted with the troubles of Hannibal, and had some commiseration for his woes.

Some hesitation as to whether he should grant freedom to him or not, was decided by Mr. Legall.

This gentleman thought that possibly Hannibal's evidence might be required, in the approaching trial of Deverel, to prove that the

paper Bliss had translated was received from Brutus, and the owner of Bella's lover hesitated no longer.

'Hannibal,' said Mr. Bliss, 'supposing I was to give you your freedom, what would you do?'

'I should thank you for it,' said Hannibal, 'and do all I could afterwards to merit the confidence you would place in me.'

'You would not wish to leave me, then, if you were free?'

'Not I, unless I were compelled,' answered Hannibal. 'I have too good a home for that.'

That day Mr. Bliss went to the office of Mr. Legall, and 'executed' the form that gave Hannibal to himself.

That evening Hannibal, with his 'free paper' in his pocket, went to see Bella, and not a prouder man walked the streets of New Orleans.

On the day fixed for the trial of Andrew Deverel, Mr. Legall entered the court armed with Yvonne's confession, and attended by Augustus Bliss, the lawyer employed by Yvonne, the apothecary of whom she had bought the poison, and the witness who had seen Brutus enter her room by the window on the day of her death. Hannibal, Bella, and Brutus were also in attendance.

The trial was not a long one. The prosecuting attorney had learnt some of the facts of the case, and knew that his exertions would be for the conviction of an innocent man.

When the circumstances attending the case were explained, the jury, without leaving the box, returned a verdict of not guilty, and Deverel was told by the judge, that, concerning the charge upon which he was accused, he should leave the court with a character uninjured.

Mr. Bliss had his carriage waiting, and he drove Deverel and Legall to the 'St. Charles,' where Deverel dressed, after which they went home with Bliss to dinner. Having once refused to see Deverel when he called, Bliss was anxious to make his reparation complete, by making Deverel accept an invitation to dine with him. During the evening, Deverel seemed in very low spirits.

In vain Bliss and Legall tried to awaken him to some animation.

'He appeared,' said Mr. Legall, 'more like a person who had been found guilty, and had received a sentence of death, than like a man honourably released from imprisonment.'

Both Bliss and Legall knew the cause of his dejection, but neither liked to mention it. That cause was the little interest Mr. Lorney seemed to take in his troubles. Hundreds of others had felt sufficient interest in the trial to

attend it, but Mr. Lorney had not. He had not come to dine with them, though invited by Bliss, and to the sensitive mind of Deverel, Mr. Lorney seemed disappointed at the result of the trial.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEVEREL MEETS WITH FRIENDS.

Ye were injured, and that means memory.

SHELLEY.

ANDREW DEVEREL was free. No dishonour was attached to his name or character, but the joy and happiness of the past had fled. He had been deeply injured in the estimation of his former friends, and he could not blame them, under the circumstances, for having formed an evil opinion of him, but he was not satisfied with the conduct of Mr. Lorney since his acquittal. He justly thought that the first

advances towards renewing the acquaintance between them should not come from him.

Much as he loved Laura Lorney, he would not go to her father and say, 'Now that my innocence is proved, will you reinstate me in your good opinion?' Pride would not allow him to do that. He was never more unhappy. When accused of murder, and lying in a jail, he had the consolation of hope. Conscience did not condemn him, and he thought that truth would ultimately place him again in the good opinion of all. Truth had triumphed, and no one could reasonably believe him guilty of anything wrong; yet no one came to him and said, 'I have wronged you. Forgive, and let me try, by my friendship in the future, to atone for the neglect of the past.'

His wounded pride required this from others, and would not yield without it. He would not crawl to others for justice.

As days passed, and no advances toward a reconciliation were made, direct or indirect, by Mr. Lorney, the soul of Andrew Deverel became sick and weary. Laura seemed farther from him than ever.

When an ill-clad vagrant, wandering where fate and circumstances led him, there was something to accomplish in life; but what should he do now?

His desire was strong to see Laura, but he would not humiliate himself to seek an interview. Conscious that his conduct had been as perfect as man's could be, he would not debase himself by stooping and crawling to others for recognition.

‘Very well,’ thought he, ‘let that dream of the past be forgotten, and may another never be mine!’

He resolved to go north, although he had no other inducement than to be doing something.

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He had never seen the 'great west,' and he determined that his journey north should be taken up the Mississippi.

At St. Louis he stayed a few days and found his friend Manby.

Manby had turned politician and was trying to get employment under government, but he was not so busy but that he could find time to pass a few hours each day with Deverel.

One day, while speaking of the past, he asked what had become of the woman Yvonne. In giving the particulars of her fate, which were so closely woven with his own, Deverel became communicative, and told the story of his misfortune.

Manby agreed with him, that he had taken the only course a man with a soul could do. 'If the father of the one you love,' said he, 'has been deceived by the story of a mad woman, so led to insult and turn you from his door, he

should be honourable enough to make an apology on learning that he has been deceived.

From St. Louis Deverel went to Chicago, and thence to Buffalo down the lakes. Buffalo is not a large city, but one with a more busy population Deverel had never seen.

His visit there was in the latter part of the month of May. Emigrants, on their way west, were thronging the streets, and fleets of steam-boats and other vessels were constantly arriving and departing. From Buffalo Deverel went by railway to New York, where he remained for several weeks, undecided what to do.

He had no desire to go into business, for he had money enough, and had no desire to make more. He did not like remaining idle, and was tired of rambling about. He had never been more unhappy, never more weary of life. He was in a state of despondency greater than

that from which John Grey had roused him on first making his acquaintance. He was aroused from this state by seeing one morning in a paper a notice of the arrival at New York of his own brig, under the command of Captain Warren. An hour afterwards he was on board the brig and with the Captain.

Captain Warren had not a full cargo, but what he had brought had been bought cheap, and was sold readily at a good price, and Andrew Deverel cleared, when all expenses were paid, more than \$12,000 by the voyage. The Captain was anxious to make another voyage, and Deverel had serious thoughts of going with him. It would be something to do, and his time would certainly pass more pleasantly than the last few weeks had been.

The dream of visiting New Guinea again came over him, but to this Captain Warren

would not listen, but it was resolved between them that another voyage for some purpose should be made to the Pacific.

One morning, in the reading-room of the hotel where he was staying, Deverel thought he saw a familiar face. Observing it more closely, he saw that it was Middleton.

Middleton was much pleased to see him, but said that he regretted to find him in trouble.

‘What makes you think I am in trouble?’ asked Deverel.

‘I’ll tell you,’ said Middleton: ‘I arrived here four days ago, and thinking you might not be at the address you gave me, as your last letter was from Havana, I thought I would try and learn where you were before writing direct to you. I wrote to John Grey, and have just received his answer. I asked him where you were, and his answer is, that he does not know, and hopes that he never shall.

I knew, by receiving that answer from a person whom I believed to be your friend, that you were in some trouble, for it is certain that a man is seldom deserted by his friends unless he is in need of their aid.'

'I must certainly give you credit for knowing something of human nature; I am in trouble, but I am thinking of getting out of it, and if you wish to go back to New Guinea, I will take you.'

'No, I do not own myself now, and the person who does own me would, I think, object to my going with you at present. I am married, and my wife is here; but are you seriously thinking of going there again?'

'Yes; my ship has returned, and the captain wishes to make another voyage. I am thinking about going with him.'

'You promised me that you would never go there again.'

‘Yes,’ I remember, but I do not think I shall break any great obligation by going. To make that all right, I shall obtain your consent to my making the voyage.’

‘You will do nothing of the kind. On the contrary, I shall do all I can with words to prevent you going.’

Deverel then told him all that had happened since they parted.

Their conversation ended by their going up to see Mrs. Middleton.

Middleton had but lately married, and never having visited America, had brought his wife for a tour during the summer.

They were going from New York to Washington, then to Niagara Falls *viâ* Pittsburgh, and would reach the sea-coast on their return, by passing through Canada.

Middleton stayed several days in New York, and during that time had many con-

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versations with Deverel to dissuade him from again visiting New Guinea. His arguments, founded on a long personal experience of the difficulties of the enterprise, had some effect, and at the time Middleton left for Washington, Deverel had not clearly decided what he would do.

Remembering the unsettled state of mind in which he had left Henry Froud, Deverel determined to give him an opportunity of going on the voyage if he wished, and wrote to him to that effect.

A few days after he received a letter from his young friend, stating that he could not go. He had just made a young girl his wife, and thought that he could remain, for a while at least, contentedly at home.

Captain Warren had relatives living in Philadelphia, and a few days before Middleton

left for Washington, the captain went to visit them.

On meeting Deverel, after his return, he said, 'Whom do you think I saw in Philadelphia?'

Deverel could not tell.

'I suppose,' said the captain, 'that you will hardly believe me, but what I am going to say is a fact. I met at an hotel, the pirate whom we brought from New Guinea to Manilla.'

'Are you sure?' asked Deverel. 'Did you speak to him?'

'Speak to him? No, not I,' answered the captain. 'I dodged him, for fear he would recognise me.'

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. LORNEY CONVINCED THAT HE IS WRONG.

AFTER Mr. Legall and Augustus Bliss had explained to Mr. Lorney the facts that had transpired concerning Yvonne, and had shown him the confession written by her before death, he was convinced that he had been deceived. He did not believe that Yvonne had been the wife of Deverel. He did not believe any of the statements she had first made concerning him ; he thought Deverel was no worse than many others who pass as respectable men ; but the recollection of what might have been made him cautious.

He did not clearly understand what intimacy there had been between Deverel and Yvonne.

He thought they must have been acquainted previously to the arrival of Deverel in the United States, and that their acquaintance must have been very intimate, or he would not have offered her two thousand dollars to leave the country.

He believed that Deverel had some money, but he did not know how it was obtained, and there was a suspicion in his mind that Deverel had represented himself as being worth more than he actually was. John Grey had only been acquainted with him for three years, and the most of that time Deverel had been away, so that John Grey had really been little acquainted with him, and nothing was known of his previous history.

Mr. Lorney thought that Deverel might be

all that he and John Grey had once thought him, but there was also possibility that he was not; and late events had taught him caution.

These considerations induced him to refrain from renewing their intimacy.

He also refrained from speaking of him to Laura, for he did not wish to excite further hopes in her mind.

Mr. Lorney had business in Washington, and determined to go and transact it in person. Thinking that the journey might divert the thoughts of Laura from thinking of one he wished her to forget, he took her with him.

Whilst in Washington, Mr. Lorney was one day at a dinner-party where he met several persons whom he had never seen before. This dinner was given by a Señor N——, who was at Washington on business for the government of New Grenada. Mr. Lorney had met Señor

N—— two or three times at the house of a gentleman from Havana.

The conversation during the evening turned upon ‘fillibustering,’ and this to Mr. Lorney was an interesting subject, and in opposition to several others he contended that ‘fillibustering’ expeditions, properly conducted, aided much towards the progress of civilization and intelligence. He gave several illustrations to substantiate this assertion, and said that William the Conqueror was but a ‘fillibuster,’ and that no one could deny but that his successful expedition had resulted in an incalculable benefit to the world at large.

‘I think,’ said Señor N——, turning to the man on his left, ‘that Mr. Lorney has been giving lessons to our friend Deverel.’

‘It is not at all improbable,’ said the man who had been introduced to the company as Mr. Middleton. ‘They hold the same opinions,

and as Deverel has been nearly everywhere, he may have met Mr. Lorney.'

The conversation then changed, but Mr. Lorney resolved to take an opportunity to learn something more of Deverel than they mentioned.

Señor N—— had but lately returned from Manilla, whence he had brought away to Panama, and married, the girl Isabel, the same who had sent him the package by the hands of Deverel. Señor N—— had met Middleton two days before, and having mentioned Manilla, they had a conversation about the place in which Deverel's name was mentioned, and this had led to an intimate acquaintance between them.

The next day Mr. Lorney called on Señor N—— and heard from him all that he knew concerning Andrew Deverel.

From what he then learnt, Mr. Lorney was

convinced that Deverel had really only been a few days on the Isthmus of Darien ; that he had never been engaged in any business there, and that the two thousand dollars he had offered to Yvonne was only to show his gratitude for her aid in helping him to escape being robbed and murdered by her husband.

From Señor N——, Mr. Lorney went to Mr. Middleton, and after satisfying him that his enquiries were not made from idle curiosity, he learnt all that gentleman could communicate on the subject upon which he wished to learn.

From Middleton he learnt that Deverel was possessed of wealth, that he owned a vessel lately returned from a successful voyage from the Pacific, and that he was a man of enterprise, who had made an attempt to explore the interior of New Guinea—an undertaking that greatly excited Mr. Lorney's admiration.

Middleton spoke very highly of Deverel,

and Mr. Lorney placed much value on his opinion, for Middleton had come from England with letters that introduced him to the best society of Washington.

He told Mr. Lorney some of the particulars concerning his acquaintance with Deverel, which corresponded with the story of Señor N—— as to the time Deverel remained on the Isthmus.

Mr. Lorney was much pleased to hear evidence that restored Deverel once more in his good opinion, not only on his own account, but on his daughter's; for every day he saw more reason to believe that Laura would never forget her attachment to Deverel.

According to Middleton's account, Deverel intended to leave the country on a long voyage, which seemed as though he had not that attachment to Laura which he ought to have, or he would not relinquish her so readily.

Thinking thus, he did not like to run after Deverel and entreat him to accept his daughter.

This false pride was removed, and a plainer view of his own conduct and duty given, in the following manner.

William Manby was trying to become one of the United States Commissioners for managing the affairs of government with the Indians, and on this business he had come to Washington, where he met with Señor N——. In a conversation about the adventure on the Isthmus, Mr. Lorney's name was mentioned, in connection with the trouble caused to Deverel by the wife of the robber Mateo.

Manby had learnt from Deverel all the particulars.

The next day, Señor N——, while in company with Mr. Lorney, again met Manby, and introduced him as the companion of Deverel on the Isthmus who had killed the two

robbers. On hearing the name of Lorney, Manby stepped back, bowed stiffly, bid Señor N—— good day, and left them.

Much annoyed at this conduct, Señor N—— an hour afterwards sought Manby, and demanded an explanation.

‘Tell Mr. Lorney,’ said Manby, ‘that a man who turns a former friend from his door, and returns his letters unopened, thus closing all means of hearing both sides of a story, and afterwards finding that he has wronged his friend, and yet makes no reparation, is not worthy of the acquaintance of William Manby.’

‘I can’t remember all that,’ said Señor N——, ‘and I would like to convey your exact words. Will you put them on paper?’

‘Certainly,’ said Manby, and after having written the words on a piece of paper, he handed them to Señor N——, saying, ‘I must now make an apology to you. I mean no

disrespect to you. My only object was to teach Mr. Lorney a lesson that may be of use to our mutual friend Deverel.'

Señor N—— accepted the apology, and communicated Manby's reason for his rudeness to Mr. Lorney.

Had Manby seen the readiness with which Mr. Lorney admitted the truth of his words, he would have given him credit for possessing some manliness. Mr. Lorney had the sense to know that a lesson had been given him. He had also the sense to understand it, and not to resent the manner in which it had been given.

The next day he was on the way to the city of New York, accompanied by his daughter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. LORNEY IN NEW YORK.

‘You are punctual to the very day,’ said Mary Grey, as she conducted Laura Lorney to a room in her father’s mansion in New York, ‘I began to expect you to-day.’

‘Then I am glad you are not disappointed,’ said Laura, ‘but I thought we should surprise you, if indeed you were in the city.’

‘Not find us in the city! What do you mean?’

‘That I had some fears you might be away from home.’

‘Do you not know why you have come here?’ asked Mary, in some astonishment.

‘Yes. My father came here on some business, and I came with him to see you, and because he did not know what to do with me unless he brought me with him.’

‘You have not received my last letter, then?’

‘I don’t understand you. Did you write to me to come?’

‘Yes, I begged you to come without any delay, but it seems my letter was not needed; you must have started before it reached New Orleans.’

‘We have been two weeks in Washington.’

‘That accounts for it; but it is all right, you are come. I could not do without you, and we shall be so busy.’

‘I wish that I had received your letter,’

said Laura, 'I should know more than I do now.'

'Never mind, you shall know all now. I want you for a bridesmaid. Mr. Woodville will be here in a few days, and your assistance is required in preparing for the ceremony, and in aiding at its performance.'

'Oh! I understand now. How stupid I have been,' said Laura, a little excited by the prospect of having something to do. But instantly the thought of her own wedding preparations dispelled the animation with which she had met her friend.

'What is the trouble with you, Laura?' asked Mary.

Laura did not cheer up, and she was told by Mary that she was looking very bad—that she 'ought not to live in the south,' and that she should not return unless her health much improved. Mary knew not of the sorrow

dwelling on the soul of her friend. Her own mind was so full of joy she knew not how others could feel unhappy.

That evening a telegram was sent to John Grey, requesting him to come to the city to see his friends from New Orleans.

This message was sent by Mr. Lorney, who wished to know from the bachelor if he had been deceived by the stories of Yvonne as he supposed, or whether there was any other cause of complaint against Deverel.

The next morning Mary Grey and Laura were driven into the city.

While in Broadway, their carriage was blocked in by many others. Just as the horses began to move on, the attention of Mary Grey was arrested by the earnest gaze of a man in a carriage close to them.

‘Look, Laura,’ whispered Mary.

Laura leaned forward and saw Andrew

Deverel. She rose from her seat, extended her arms, and in a low voice involuntarily exclaimed, 'Andrew!'

The horses sprang forward, and Laura fell back into her seat. She did not faint, but she was too much agitated to pay visits, and she begged to return home. Mary Grey reached home wiser than she left. She asked Laura no questions, but she was very gentle and tender with her.

There had been no communication between Mr. Lorney and John Grey since the receipt of the letter denouncing Deverel.

Mr. Lorney had refrained from writing from a feeling of which he was now ashamed, and he intended to make an apology to the bachelor for having so long neglected to correspond with him.

John Grey supposed that Mr. Lorney felt some resentment towards him for having

introduced a person of an improper character, and on receiving the request to meet them in New York, he was very reluctant to comply.

He knew not how to meet Laura, to whom he had so often spoken of Deverel; he believed that she had been much influenced by the praise he had so foolishly bestowed on an unworthy object. 'To meet her,' thought he, 'is probably a part of the punishment for the folly I have committed. I am no coward, and will go and take that punishment like a man.'

The next day he started for the city, and reached the residence of his brother in the evening. The bachelor was much pleased with the reception he met from Mr. Lorney, and began to think his offence was not so serious as he had supposed; but this delusion was removed when he saw Laura.

When refused by the only girl he had ever loved, John Grey did not feel a woe so bitter

as on seeing Laura Lorney—so pale and delicate, so sad and hopeless, seeming so listless and weary of life. He believed from what Mary had told him that Andrew Deverel was the cause of the change, but in place of Andrew Deverel he substituted the name of John Grey, who had introduced Deverel to the family, and had said so much to prepare the way for the mischief that had taken place.

He came out of the room from visiting Laura more grieved than he had ever been in his life. Mr. Lorney requested a private interview with him.

Expecting to hear something that would, if possible, add to his misery, Mr. Grey went to Mr. Lorney, who began a conversation, as the bachelor expected, about Deverel.

‘I wish to know,’ said Mr. Lorney, ‘how Deverel came to lose your good opinion? You once thought very highly of him, and

afterwards you denounced him to me as a scoundrel. It is but reasonable that I should know your reasons.'

'Certainly,' said John Grey. 'I had reason to believe that he had deceived me—that he was married, and had ill-used his wife.'

'How did you obtain this information?'

'From his wife, who called on me when she was trying to find him, after he had cheated her out of the money which I saw by his own handwriting he had promised her.'

'Did you obtain any information about him other than what was received from that woman?'

'No; but that was quite sufficient. I did wrong in ever aiding him, but I trust you will believe that wrong was committed through folly, and not with any evil intentions.'

'Do not make any self-accusations or apologies,' said Mr. Lorney. 'It is I who

should apologise for having neglected so long to write to you. Whatever might be the faults of Deverel, I had no reason to suppose that you knew anything of them when you introduced him to me ; and you were the first to warn me against him when you were convinced of his dishonesty.'

'Say nothing more about that,' said John Grey, 'I shall never forgive myself.'

'Yes you will. We have both of us been imposed upon by a mad woman.'

'Imposed upon by a mad woman? Deverel all right?'

'Yes. There was not a word of truth in her story. So she confessed in a paper written before she poisoned herself.'

'But what about the written promise of two thousand dollars, signed by Deverel?'

'He did offer her that sum, but only from generosity and gratitude for her attention to

him while ill on the Isthmus, and for her aid in escaping from her husband, who was a robber and murderer. Deverel was only on the Isthmus a week, as I have learnt from two very respectable men.'

'Is this possible?' asked the bachelor, in a high state of excitement.

'Yes. I have received evidence that gives me the highest opinion of Deverel. I have a better opinion of him now than ever I had before. He is somewhere in the city, and I have come here to find him.'

'I was never more pleased in my life,' said John Grey, 'than I am at this moment. I was never more disappointed than having to believe that he had deceived me.'

'Let us find him immediately, and make what reparation we can,' said Mr. Lorney.

'I can find him,' said the bachelor, 'for I

know the address of his attorney. Come on. We will go immediately.'

Before leaving the house, they told Mary Grey to let Laura know of the business on which they were going, and to tell her that they would probably bring Deverel back with them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RECONCILIATION.

ON the day that Mary and Laura drove out, Deverel was crossing Broadway with an acquaintance in a carriage.

During the delay in the street, Deverel saw in a carriage by his side a face that seemed familiar. An instant's reflection told him that it was Mary Grey. He did not see her companion until she leaned forward and he met the gaze of Laura.

He saw the extended hand, the sudden illumination of her features, and heard her lips

pronounce the name of 'Andrew' as she vanished from his sight.

'Laura still loves me,' exclaimed Deverel.

'What do you say?' asked his friend.

'Set me down here,' answered Deverel. 'I have business up this street.'

His friend complied, and he returned to his rooms. 'Laura still loves me,' he exclaimed, when sitting alone. 'That is enough for happiness, although all the world besides should despise me. Laura still loves me, and I am happy.'

Then came a fierce struggle between love and pride—a noble pride that strove to prevent him from marrying Laura without the consent of her father, which consent he would never again strive to obtain. Love asked him why they should both live unhappily. Pride answered, 'Do not stoop for happiness. You have earned it honourably, and do not accept it but on honourable terms.'

Long and severe was the struggle, but pride conquered. He would not even communicate by letter with her whose father had condemned him unheard.

The next morning he was still undecided what to do. He was not prone to indecision, but he was puzzled by the position in which he was placed—it seemed to leave nothing for him but wait, and this was an occupation he did not like. How and where should he wait? were questions that perplexed him.

There was the contemplated voyage to the Pacific that might be taken; but the memory of the appearance of Laura as she was last seen forbade him to think of that.

He might return from the voyage and find her dead.

While trying to settle on some plan of action, the name of John Grey was announced.

‘Not at home to Mr. Grey,’ said Deverel,

thinking of the bachelor's note of three lines declining any further acquaintance with him.

‘And Mr. Lorney,’ added the servant.

‘Not at home to Mr. Lorney,’ said Deverel.

‘Mr. Deverel is not at home to either of you,’ said the servant, returning to Mr. Grey, who, with Mr. Lorney, was in the reading room below.

‘Did Mr. Deverel tell you so?’ asked John Grey.

‘Yes, sir.’

‘What shall we do?’ said the bachelor.

‘Shall we go up and force our way to him?’

‘No,’ answered Mr. Lorney, ‘let us write to him.’

A note was then written stating that they had called for the purpose of explaining their conduct towards him — that Mr. Lorney had come a long distance for that purpose. Then followed the statement of all the circumstances

under which they had acted, and acknowledging that they had done wrong in not giving Deverel an opportunity of making an explanation on his own behalf. The note concluded by entreating him to call and see them that evening, and to let the past be forgotten.

When Deverel read this letter, he saw what he had not before seen, viz. the effect produced by the note he had sent to Yvonne offering her money. He comprehended for the first time that the evidence against him must have appeared very conclusive. He was thankful to have all cleared up; that evening he again shook hands with Mr. Lorney and John Grey, and he was again with Laura.

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUSION.

LAURA'S health rapidly improved, and she was soon able to aid Mary in the laborious occupation of shopping.

Woodville came at the appointed time, and Mary's wedding was a grand affair.

The day after the wedding Mr. Lorney and his daughter set off on their return to New Orleans. Deverel soon followed them; he had persuaded Laura again to appoint a day for their marriage, and John Grey promised to be there.

The bachelor, with his usual prudence, before

undertaking this journey, made a will bequeathing all his property, in equal portions, to his niece Mary Woodville and Andrew Deverel.

John Grey was astonished at all he saw in the 'Crescent City.'

'The Levée,' encumbered with vast sources of national wealth which was being shipped in vessels from which the flags of all nations were flying, exhibited a scene very interesting to one who had been the most of his days transacting business on the Erie canal.

But what most astonished John Grey was the great change that had taken place with Augustus Bliss, who then talked, looked, and acted much as other people did. This change had been gradually brought about by his wife.

Bella had become Mrs. Hannibal Gordanier, and with her husband was a domestic in the household of Mr. Augustus Bliss.

Hannibal, at the request of Deverel, found Brutus, to whom Deverel gave money to purchase a fine horse and dray, which Brutus said was all he wanted to establish him in a ‘spectabul perdition.’

* * * * *

‘Laura,’ said Deverel, one day, after she had been for three months his wife, ‘have you ever seen your unknown lover who used to write to you?’

‘I see him now,’ said Laura.

THE END.

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